A Challenge to Modern Skepticism

PRELUDE:
An Indictment of Unitarianism

JOHN B. KOEHNE

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A Challenge to Modern Skepticism

OR

The Reasonableness of Christianity

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"From
Aunt Jennie"

Xmas. 1919

JOHN B. KOEHNE, D.D.

(Membership is with the Congregational Association of Chicago.)

A Challenge to Modern Skepticism

By
JOHN B. KOEHNE, D.D.

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

MY WIFE

Mary Milligan Koehne

PREFACE.

This book contains the lecture on *"Ecce Homo!* or, The Personality of Christ," and correlated material taken from several other discussions of this series of lectures, which for many years has been given as a platform message, before the churches of this country.

Their publication redeems a promise, made to many business men, to put into print this address.

The subject matter is left precisely as it has been delivered, hundreds of times, therefore contains the weaknesses and limitations involved in the attempt to transmute speech into type.

At the time the series was prepared for the platform, there was no thought of putting any of the lectures into a book. Therefore no record was kept of the authorities consulted. But to name this list of books would be practically to name the works that belong to Christological literature. To those familiar with this realm of study, this is unnecessary. I wish, however, to make grateful acknowledgment to

the officers of Mansfield College, Oxford, who so kindly gave me the freedom of the College libraries, when the series was revised there, in the summer of 1899.

It is needless to say that I am greatly indebted to the inspiration of Dr. Fairbairn's works; also to that beautiful English book entitled, "Leading Ideas of the Gospels." To Victor Cousin, Hegel, Hugo, for suggestions regarding human greatness. Among Americans, to Bushnell, and to the Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, whose book on "The Man of Galilee" was invaluable.

This gives me opportunity also to express my appreciation of my friend, Mr. Fred Farwell, of New London, N. H. A nobler manhood I never knew. Without his counsel and his consummate genius in constructive criticism, my platform work would have suffered irreparably.

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PRELUDE.

AN INDICTMENT OF UNITARIANISM.

At the Diet of Worms, Rome affirmed and tried to vindicate the supreme authority of the Church. Upon that ancient principle Rome rests to-day. When Martin Luther left the Council, a new principle was introduced into the history of religion, "The Right of Private Judgment."

While this principle is one of the intellectual glories of the human mind and of Christianity, one logical and injurious result was, Protestant Christianity subdivided itself into denominations. To-day, Protestantism presents the paradox of flying upon the same mast the Banner of the Cross and the flags representing human thinking. Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Zwingli — these *were* men; but time has changed them into creedal names but little less in glory, in the interpretation of Christianity, than that of Jesus Christ himself.

At heart, however, among the denominations, there is unswerving loyalty to One Master.

But the menace to Protestanism is the principle, "The Right of Private Judgment."

For example: to-day, in New England Congregationalism, we see the miracles of Christ being attacked by *The Congregationalist* and some of the most distinguished theologians. This involves the denial of the authenticity of the New Testament, the denial of Christ's incarnation, and of His resurrection, and must culminate in absolute surrender to Unitarianism.

In the Middle West, the warfare is going on in the various denominations upon the plea for "Liberalism" and "Broad-Mindedness," expressed in the concrete term, "New Theology," which is Unitarianism under a new name.

Any theology that steps outside of the personality of Christ, His words and works, as interpreted through the Cross, is *false.* Christianity involves the idea of "Redemption;" and for man to introduce his own thinking into the plans of God, is to impeach the mind of God.

Unitarianism has for its major premise, "The Right of Private Judgment." Its minor premise, is the popular affirmation of

Agnosticism, "That which cannot be demonstrated within the terms of human reason cannot be true." The conclusion is inevitable. Unitarianism is to-day the "Iconoclast" among the schools of Christian theology.

But Unitarianism refuses to be a school; it calls itself a Christian denomination, and looks with relentless contempt upon all the Evangelical denominations as "narrow," "bigoted," "clinging to old theologies that were long ago outgrown."

It is the most insolent paradox perpetrated in the annals of the world's religions. It calls itself "Christian," and denies the supreme affirmation of Christianity, "The Deity of Christ."

It poses as "broad." No Jew, no Mohammedan, no Catholic Jesuit, was ever more intolerant, narrow, bigoted and uncompromising. Any Evangelical theologian can assent to all that the Unitarian may affirm concerning the humanity of Christ. He can see that, and more. The Unitarian sees nothing in Christ, save "The Son of Man," and he froths with anger if you enlarge the word "divinity" beyond the limits of his puny personality.

"Broad!" Does the Unitarian yield anything in any conference with Evangelical Churchmen looking toward a compromise? Not one inch. Every concession must be made by the Evangelicals. When the Congregationalists and the Unitarians in New England met in ecclesiastical conference, or even in a fellowship meeting, what did the Unitarian yield? Nothing!

It is a school built on negations, therefore it can affirm nothing. It attacks Genesis, impeaches the historical data of the Pentateuch, makes the Psalms the music of earth, and the visions of the prophets meaningless dreams. Pausing at the New Testament with the denial of our Lord's deity, the word "Jesus" is substituted for the word "Christ;" the Miracles are explained according to the laws of psychic phenomena; the Resurrection of Christ is accounted for, either by open denial, or as an optical illusion, or as having simply a spiritual meaning. This makes room for an impeachment of the Bible, a denial of the authenticity of the New Testament, a denial of a revelation from God; in short, involves chaos.

If Jesus of Nazareth was "The Son of Man," as Unitarianism defines that term, if

in Him did not dwell "The fullness of the Godhead bodily," Christianity becomes a man-made religion, having no higher authority than that of Mohammed, or Confucius, or Zoroaster.

Nay more! These claim nothing supernatural. Christianity does. If Jesus Christ be not God incarnate, Christianity is built upon a lie.

What is the great issue before the church to-day?

It is not the problems, suggested by the scientist, that lie in the book of Genesis. It is not the historical data of the Pentateuch. It is not the place of the prophets in the Old Testament, whether or not what they said was inspired, nor whether what they said related to Jesus of Nazareth. The modern discussion regarding John's gospel is not the great problem. Dr. Gordon, of Boston, has raised the question, "Is Christianity dependent upon the Miracle?" He names this as the theological issue of the hour.

There can be only one issue; either Jesus of Nazareth was the Eternal Father veiled in mortal flesh, or He was simply an intellectual prodigy, self-deluded and deceiving

others. There is no middle ground. All other problems must yield supremacy to this,—that either Jesus of Nazareth was God Incarnate, or, He was not.

When we accept the deity of Christ, the Old Testament becomes a manuscript luminous as the sky. The Book of Genesis ceases to be a scientific statement regarding *how* things were done. It states the moral relationships between God and man, and man and man. It does not answer the question, "How?" but "Why" things are as they are. It reveals not causes, but final causes. Conceding the deity of Christ, the Pentateuch describes the development of the spiritual consciousness of a Race. The Prophets cease to belong to a race, they become world men. Their speech contains the echoes of God's thinking. They are the forerunners of Christ. Conceding the deity of Christ, John's gospel ceases to be a battle-ground; the prologue in that gospel contains the philosophy of the skies. Conceding the deity of Christ, there is no miracle problem. Christ's works are then the works of God, which are beyond human comprehension. When Dr. Lyman Abbott and Dr.

Gordon outline a definition of a miracle, then there *is* a miracle problem. But if Christ did the works accredited Him, they were as God's works, impossible of analysis. It would be as easy for Dr. Abbott to perform a miracle, as to define it. Because, to give a definition of a miracle, one must have knowledge of the forces employed, and the laws through which these forces operated. Since we do not know what force is, nor God's *method* in creative processes, we must affirm that either Christ's works were the works of God, therefore as mysterious as creation itself, or His works were those of a juggler, and He was an impostor.

Therefore, all the problems involved in the Old and New Testaments are resolved into one question: "Who was Jesus of Nazareth?"

Unitarianism affirms that Jesus of Nazareth was divine as all men are divine, greater only in degree. This is an unequivocal denial of the deity of Christ.

The purpose of this book is, to prove that the Unitarian affirmation is absolutely false.

The seriousness of the issue involved, like

warfare, makes lawful every weapon of attack, or of defence. Unitarianism gives no quarter and asks none.

"Unitarianism," in this Prelude, does not mean a term used as a reproach to certain individuals. This is not a war between men, but between schools of thought. Its first battle was fought when, far back in the centuries, Arius stood as the champion of Christ's humanity, excluding the idea of His deity.

Two facts have always been flaunted in the face of Evangelical Christianity. First, the boast of the lovely character of men and women who are Unitarians. That is granted, but it proves nothing. There are also amiable savages in Africa. There are gentle natures in Asia. There are beautiful lives among the Mohammedans. Among Skeptics, Agnostics and Atheists are characters of extraordinary moral graces. No one would question Mr. Robert G. Ingersoll's beautiful home life, and that his moral character was as far beyond reproach as that of Edward Everett Hale. The most zealous Prohibitionist would not deny that behind the garish window of the saloon are generous natures, while ofttimes we read of

deeds of nobility and heroism large as the words themselves, wrought by inmates of the brothel.

Second, we are asked to explain the fact that such a school can boast a splendid array of intellectual men and women; nay, a roll-call of essayists, novelists, scientists, historians, poets, scholars, orators, more famous in literature than can be claimed by any evangelical denomination in this country.

That, too, is granted without debate.

But that constitutes its condemnation. It poses as a religious organization, and gives birth only to men of literary distinction.

So did Stoicism in Athens and in the Roman Empire. That school created types of human greatness like these mentioned. Also, Stoicism, like Unitarianism, was as bitter and as relentless in its attack upon the supernatural in Christianity, and never surrendered until the school itself had perished.

Strictly speaking, for the sake of intellectual decency, Unitarianism should not claim to be a religious denomination, but a school of ethics, Stoicism under a new name.

The proof that it is not religious, and certainly not a Christian denomination, is the fact that it does not give birth to reformers, saints, and angel-souled men and women;—that is, human natures transfigured with the ideal of the Cross.

Analyze any Unitarian priest, and you analyze the Unitarian mind. He claims to be salt, to preserve the good of all religions. This moulds him into the most negative personality among the sons of men. The present hour—its high privileges; the future—its stern demands; the past—its wrongs to be righted;—these stir not his blood one pulse beat. No Christian Marseillaise ever uses his lips as organ pipes. Prophecy never scorches his heart with thunder. His words are never horsed to chariots of war. He is calm, passionless as the Sphinx, with a civilization dying in its shadow. Dante knocked at the gates of the under world, but the Unitarian cares nothing for the future. He denies there is a future of possible suffering. The Jewish prophet feathered his wings with lightnings, and listened with his ear against the sky, but the Unitarian,—calm, gentle, unemotional, almost impersonal,—keeps his eye

upon the earth. Here is a man uninfluenced by the sovereign witchcraft of heroism. A man unwhipped by the sneers of skepticism. A man unstirred by the indignities heaped upon his times. Disinherited by orthodoxy, possessing neither the Mohammedan ambition to destroy, nor the reformer's instinct to upbuild, this man wanders through his fatherland, playing upon his ethical lute, "All is well." How is Humanity to know "All is well"? He says so!

Challenge him to describe his mission. There is nothing of the supernatural in it. You will be amazed at its earthy character.

Earthy? It seems like plucking moss from graves to analyze it. Here it is in a sentence: To make the imperialism of Evangelical Christianity to cease, to mould future ages in the sepulchre of the past, to give America a religious golden age, emotionless as the repose of the desert. This is the teaching which, unfading as marble, has dictated the policy of Unitarianism for generations.

What is the effect of this creed upon the Unitarian sect? It is a world with the shadow of things, but not their substance.

It has church buildings, but not church-

men. It has scholars, but not theologians. It has poets, but no reformers. Unitarianism accepts Confucius of China as a moral teacher with the rank of an Hebrew prophet. It welcomes Buddhism from India and gives Buddha mastership equal with Christ. Its theological wall shuts out the supernatural in religion, and shuts human reason in. The result is paralysis. Unitarianism is like the rocking of a cradle,—there is movement, but no progress.

Shall we judge the system by its fruits? What surer way than to measure the Unitarian priest himself? Concede all he can ask. What are the counter facts? The damnation of intellectual pride builds a flaming wall between himself and humanity. Through prolonged self-discipline he is able like the Phœnix to unfurl new wings out of the fiery ashes of misfortune, but the drunkards, the harlots, the criminals, the self-abandoned can not. Do you point to his vows? They do not mean worship. Do you speak of his ethical theory of self-sacrifice? As well try to coin the gold of a butterfly's wing as to reduce that theory to active benevolence. What! measure an Unitarian with a modern Cranmer, or Gari-

baldi? When did he ever kindle the skies with the prophetic arch of a great reformation? We have poets that inspire to godliness. What hymn of theirs deserves that eulogy? Their speculations concerning God quicken thought, but do they inspire reverence? Does not their literature co-rival the noblest of our times? True, and to them it is more sacred than the Bible. But has one page ever affected the destinies of other denominations than their own? Reduced to its simplest form, what is their gospel? That sin is ignorance; that meditation will quell the riot of the passions; that rulership, reform, are seated in the will, the reason; that peace cannot reign until the senses are yoked through self-discipline; that a serene mind here and now outranks the problems of the future.

To the Unitarian, Christianity is a philosophy and not a religion; therefore, Unitarianism is a moral theory. It offers self-discipline independent of the help of God? It does not make man kinsman to the skies, because it destroys man's worshipping instincts. It makes men Unitarians, but not sons of God. But that is not all. Never did a heathen people under its spell achieve con-

federate rights among the nations of the world, as Japan has done under the ministry of Evangelical Christianity. Great wrongs, like fire, warp the iron and marble columns of our political institutions, but not from them do we hear the voice of protest, rebuke or warning. The most ordinary life is carved more wondrously than Achilles' shield, but when did a Unitarian ever plead the cause of the sweat-shop workers? No; his highest ambition is to pause in life, his hands folded in resignation; through culturing processes he conquers the senses and attains "Nirvana,"—perfect repose. But beyond him, is a shadow. In that shadow are the millions. That shadow is sin. Penitence avails nothing. Though a man swathe his arm with fire, make his dwelling-place amid thorns and scorpions, roll his garments in blood, and die self-strangled with curses of despair, there is no hope in Unitarianism. Even for angels charged with folly, sin hath no remedy in their philosophy. Repentance, Regeneration, Atonement are not graven in their scriptures. And this, because Unitarianism is like Buddhism, essentially Pantheistic. That is the fatal flaw of that system.

That is why, though still wearing the borrowed plumage of Christianity, it kneels in Boston now, as powerless to quell the vices of that city, as thistledown to unhorse the evil forces of a storm.

Where are its Evangelists? When did it ever duplicate the day of Pentecost? Where in the ranks of the Salvation Army do you find Unitarians? What Unitarian is secretary of a Young Men's Christian Association? How much is contributed by them for the support of Crittenden Homes for the redemption of fallen women? Where is the location of its Bible Society? Has it ever nurtured a Fulton Street prayer-meeting? Does it minister to those in prison? Do Unitarian ministers preach in almshouses? Has Unitarian money ever furnished places where beggars can get food and drink and shelter in winter? How many newsboys' homes has it erected? What reform has it ever inaugurated that lifted its sword against vice, crime, drink or any wickedness of the great cities? Where are its missionaries among the Indians? What is it doing to-day as a denomination to solve the problems of the negro race by schools or churches? When did it tender a college

gift to the mountain whites of the Southland? Where are its societies of women who devote themselves to the protection of girls landing upon American soil from European steamships? What is the name of its society whose agents find homes for orphan babes and children? Where are its temples in the slum district of any great metropolis?

There is a story that during the Dark Ages, when the Crusaders were about to sweep across the Alps to rescue the Holy Sepulchre, a man was being consecrated for knighthood by a priest. It was midnight. The great cathedral was wrapped in unearthly gloom, broken only by the dim light of some candles. Within a few feet was an ancient tomb. Suddenly the priest and the kneeling novitiate were thrilled with terror by a sound within the stone vault. They listened. There was no mistake. A faint knocking was heard from within the vault, where a man had been buried centuries ago. The knight seemed powerless to move. The priest walked bravely to the tomb, and by almost supernatural strength lifted the lid, and flung the light of his candle into the black depths. A

human skull was rolling round as if alive. The heroic priest reached in his hand and picked up the hideous thing. To his horror there rolled from the skull a serpent. Hissing and writhing it fell to the floor.

Translate that story into the terms of this century-old controversy. That skull belonged to Arius; that serpent is Unitarianism!

In denying the deity of Christ, Unitarianism renders judgment that He was immortal and divine only as all men are immortal and divine. Push this proposition to its logical conclusion, and this judgment makes of " Moses and the Prophets " the ravings of delirium; it declares every Apostle either hoodwinked through ignorance, or self-deceived, and with lying lips deceiving others; it makes Paul go in chains to Rome, self-damned with a delusion; it makes, of the martyrs of the centuries, each to die as the fool dieth. This judgment arraigns the scholarship of Christendom as the mouthing of an idiot dream, and brands the Christian piety of two hemispheres as blasphemous idolatry.

Unitarianism, with its heart cold as the ashes of Arius, its ancestor; with an intel-

lectual insolence and bravado worthy of Julian the Apostate, its elder brother; upon the Sabbath day, garbed in the stolen robes of Christian discipleship, utters the Judas cry, "Hail, Master!" then, in every controversy with Evangelical Christianity, for a few pieces of silver, called "Freedom of Thought," it gives the Master the kiss of treason.

Unitarianism, with its granite-hewn imitations of churches, and these desolate as a cemetery, save at the funeral of one of its members; in whose pulpits the Bible is read with the same reverence as is accorded the essays of Marcus Aurelius, that royal butcher, his hands wet with the blood of the Saints; Unitarianism, whose copper-fingered gifts to benevolences in this country constitute a scornful parody upon Christian philanthropy, and whose miserly contributions to missions are an insult to Asia;—this sect, which boasts no university worthy a scholar's cloak, save Harvard, the child of Congregationalism, pirated generations ago, during the delirium of its Mother;—this mockery of Protestantism, whose self-proclaimed priests bend their knees to nothing, save to a god mirrored each in his own

intellectual image; whose most intense and aggressive zeal is shown in sending giftbooks to poison the minds of the youthful prophets in our Christian seminaries;—this denomination, calling itself "Christian," which turns its mask-like face upon the sinful multitudes, bloodless and void of sympathy as the heart of Roman Stoicism; which makes the Evangelist the object of its derision, and a Revival the subject of its mirth; which affirms that a creedless platform is the only foundation for a creed; which offers the world negations for theology, and worm-eaten platitudes as texts for sermons;—this intellectual monstrosity, still-born when the night of the Dark Ages had flung its first shadows upon Europe, but which has the actions of a human being only because of the galvanizing influence of Christianity;—Unitarianism, standing here, and now, in the Twentieth Century, its hand clasping the leprous hand of Skepticism, turns to Christendom, prostrate in worship before the Triune God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and says, as Festus, drunken with impudence, said to Paul, "Thou art mad!"

FOREWORD.

Concerning Jesus of Nazareth,—regardless of who wrote the Gospels or when they were written,—our knowledge is derived from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Skepticism affirms that He was simply a great man, and denies His divinity.

Unitarianism affirms, that He was divine, as all men are divine, greater only in degree; and denies His deity.

It is not proposed here to discuss the subtle distinction between Skepticism and Unitarianism; the purpose of this book is to prove that both affirmations are absolutely false!

From the window of my home, I once saw the last act in the tragedy of a storm. Above the fields, the broken fences, the torn trees and flooded streams, stretched the magnificent fury of that tempest; but like the tragedy of Hamlet, when all grows serene and peaceful after the hero dies, so the

winds seemed to cling half fainting to bush and flower until the last notes of the thunder song were trumpeted back from the hills beyond the river far away. The clouds folded and re-folded upon the western sky, their angry lips fretted with lightnings which had lost their beautiful wrath. Then, suddenly, unseen fingers reached from the background, the storm cloud was torn in the centre, lifted, and a blazing arch appeared; thence from mysterious depths the sun streamed forth.

In history, that storm cloud was Heathenism, that beautiful arch, Judaism, and the glory streaming through to the present time, The Christian Religion.

Heathenism was humanity upon its face in despair. Judaism was humanity upon its knees, hoping, praying and prophesying. In Christ, for the first time in history, humanity stood upon its feet.

CHAPTER I.

The Preparation for Christ Through Judaism.

At the close of a sermon on "Miracles," in a European church, a king said to the preacher, "Chaplain, show me a modern miracle."

The Chaplain answered, "The Jews, your Majesty."

Imagine yourselves in existence about three thousand years ago.

Whole continents are unknown. Civilization seems as far away as summer when prophesied in a bird's song from a bank of snow. In India self-tortured priests droop their knees to the unknown God. The Chinese sage is offering the first translation of the sun's eclipse. Egypt has learned to robe the dead in perfumed vestments to mock decay. Solomon is building the first great temple in Jerusalem. How beautiful it is, leaning against the twilight! A caravan is leaving Damascus gate. In one saddle is gold coin, destined to usurp the place of ivory as money. In another saddle is a

copy of the alphabet newly created from hieroglyphics. Twelve centuries later a Roman tyrant will add three letters more. As you pass into Thebes mark the wooden statues of her priests! Sculpture is about to put on coronation robes among the fine arts. Agriculture is the eldest born of the sciences, save one, War. At this very hour Sardanapalus is rolling sword-wheeled chariots into doomed Babylon. The blare of the battle trumpets is frightful. Under their bloody axes Western Asia kneels to Assyrian rule. We dare not visit Sparta; it has no laws and is savage as a den of wolves. Nor the ocean, for it is a chartless mystery. The seas must wait for Columbus. The sky craped in night like a Florentine Nun turns its starry eyes upon the unfinished walls of Carthage. That city is destined to be a thorn in the foot of Roman progress some day. The hour is weird, unutterable in loneliness. Abraham has been dead a thousand years and Virgil is not ordained to sing until nine hundred more. Our Saxon ancestors have their skins tattooed, are drinking wine from skulls, and are as gentle as starving lions smelling blood. That prophet in the desert brood-

ing a whirlwind into a curse is Elijah. Yonder poet wandering through the broken palaces of Troy is,—Homer. The eagle of civilization is girded with the night owl's drooping wing, a slow fitful flight through the darkness. The only records of the past are painted upon obelisks. The only foregleam of an immortal life is the Egyptian Book of the Dead. The slave's child is whelped in a dungeon. Men are yoked with cattle. Women are the spoils of the soldiers. Here and there a throne's black shadow crosses the world. A tiger's scowl upon a tyrant's face is all that is known of government.

In this hour, when America was unknown, when Europe was not mapped upon the scroll of nations, when the Mediterranean sea was dreaming when it would be marble-walled with cities, — already the Jewish race was walking the dusty streets of earth, with head erect and eyes blazing with prophecies.

The origin of the Hebrew people is buried in mystery. Scholarship has sifted the dust of vanished races, and has found no clue, beyond the simple record that these were, "The children of Abraham." In Abraham

the genius of the race is summarized. He is called "The Friend of God." Centuries have added nothing to that God idea. The God of Abraham is now the God of modern Christianity. A rainbow of prophecy reaches from Mount Moriah to Calvary, "In Abraham all the nations of the world shall be blest."

In Jacob we get a fresh starting point. His wrestling with the angel was a prophecy of Israel's future struggles between a moral destiny and an earthly civilization. Before Jacob dies his name is changed to "Israel, Prince of God!"

Jacob's last days were spent in Egypt. It was a wonderful change for the old man. For nearly an hundred years, he had lived a rude shepherd, a hermit, a wanderer, sometimes with a stone for a pillow, sometimes without bread. Now he is the guest of the most powerful king in the world. Perhaps Joseph, his son, has shown him the tombs in the pyramids where kings lay buried in coffins hewn from gold. He has gazed upon the Sphinx, which, human-faced and lion-footed, incarnated Egypt's dread majesty. There he stands gazing curiously at the Colossi, their hands upon

their knees, the symbol of Egyptian repose. He has stood within the temples whose granite columns overwhelm us even unto this day.

One day he is invited to visit the king. Leaning upon the arm of his son Joseph he enters the imperial presence, and lifts his aged hands in blessing. You can almost hear the king say, "How old art thou?" What are the feelings of that Jew at this moment? There is a prophecy smouldering in his heart. But can he not see that this prophecy is a delusion? Is not Egypt supreme? Can he not foretell that here his people are doomed to become bondsmen, that Egypt's throne shall abide forever and his people perish?

Jacob is dying now. His sons are kneeling at his side. He has blest them all save one. He calls that one: "Judah, thou art the Lion's whelp; thy father's children shall bow before thee. The sceptre shall not depart from thee until Shiloh come. Then, unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Ask the modern physician; he will say, "This man doth rave, his lips are fever-kissed with delirium."

In a few days yonder goes a little funeral procession. Jacob is being carried to his grave. The years pass by and the king dies. Then the centuries begin to roll around and Egypt is stretched a skeleton upon the banks of the Nile. Other centuries roll by and the splendid Oriental empires have vanished into memories. Suddenly in the sky, a glory breaks. That mysterious utterance from Jacob's dying lips bursts forth into immortal music. It is the singing of the angels over the hills of Bethlehem. That man's dying whisper and that song, after many centuries, are linked—aye, forever!

A new chapter in Israel's history is opened, when we see that people enslaved, making bricks without straw in Egypt, scourged by the tyranny of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh! Who could justly describe that throne-bred monster whose baby lips had nursed the tiger's milk of cruelty? Imagine one with a face seared with the lethargy of winter, whose coronet should have been a living serpent coiled around his brow, eyes blistered with prejudice, writing his princely titles to a throne with a pen of swords, feathering himself with the stolen dignities of conquered races, pouring

into the wine-cup of his ambitions huge states, a king, whose aim culminated in the frightful ambition to use his army as a funeral wreath, the costly toils of Egypt for a pyramid tomb,—imagine this, and you have Pharaoh of the oppression.

Nevertheless, the rise of the common people, and the genesis of our modern liberties, date back to that hour. It was a movement intelligently begun. It was not a riot upon the streets. It was a revolution inspired by patriotism. Suddenly a Jew confronts the throne and cries, "Let my people go." Pharaoh was the incarnation of Oriental tyranny; yet see how that throne of his was blackened, earthquaked, and shriveled up, because a few Jews blew indignant breaths against it. "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." That cry upon the lips of Moses gave birth to the American republic.

A question! Why did God elect the Jew an embassador to carry forward His holy purposes? Answer this question: Why were the Greeks called to teach the world the arts, and the Romans to teach the world statesmanship? Answer this question: Why is that girl burning at the stake, Joan

of Arc? Why is that man upon the scaffold, Savonarola? Why is that man in the dungeon, Archbishop Cranmer? What is the gain, when John the Baptist is beheaded, and that intellectual prodigy, Stephen, in mid-career, his lips volcanic, suddenly is smitten into silence? Let the man who can interpret the philosophy of the skies read for us. Why God does things we do not know. His purpose is, to consecrate a people for a world ministry. He takes mortal flesh and blood and compounds it with iron and granite. The result is the Jewish race. Iron and granite? Yes! It is the one unbreakable race of history. Other races have amalgamated and vanished. Races have intermarried and lost wars with surrounding peoples, and have overswept by revolutions, migrations, and wars with surrounding peoples, and have died. The survival of the Jewish race after passing through every tragical crisis, through persecutions and martyrdoms unparalleled in history,—this race which literally has marched through the centuries in chains, this race which scarcely ever breathed, except the air of a dungeon, this race that was for ages the living footstool

of Oriental kings,—if no record of the supernatural were presented to skepticism except the preservation of that race, the skeptic's dilemma would be, either to grant that here was a miracle, or affirm that history is a spider web of malignant energies, and in yonder skies justice is dead and the throne of God is in ashes.

Let Draper and Buckle, these proud voices of materialistic philosophy, prove to you that climate moulds the personality of a race. They offer in evidence the Greeks, the Germanic peoples, the Hindus. It is a mathematical certitude, according to these scholars, that the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the forests, like gigantic hands, fashion human clay into racial individuality. It is child's play for an historian to demonstrate also, that a tribe or race is warped by contact with a new civilization. For example, take the Negroes and Indians; note how they have been rebronzed by the institutions of this country.

Or stand yonder in New York: Watch the hordes from Europe, from every tribe and nation, flung into the crucible of our civilization; there they are melted; their racial attributes are burned out; even their

lips are imprinted with new speech; the customs and habits of centuries with their rags are flung aside, and in a few years, a generation or two, these strangers, these aliens, are transformed into citizens of the republic and accept the heroic soldiership of American ideals.

But the Jew, a citizen of all climates, of all civilizations, of all centuries, whether in Asia, or under the black mask of Africa, or in this new world of ours, a son of Jacob in Washington City, or the son of Jacob who meets you in Arab garb under the shadow of the Sphinx, they are brethren, in blood, civilization, and religion.

Here, also, is the mystery and tragedy of history. The prejudice that whispers in the heart of an ignorant Gentile is voiced in open enmity, outrageous tyranny and unutterable martyrdoms everywhere in the past. It would seem, if God ruled, that He should a century ago have damned Russia for her infamous age-long persecution of the Jews, and for the same reason should have flung the Turkish Empire into hell.

If we could only call from their tombs those Oriental monsters called monarchies, they would upon the witness stand, before

the tribunal of history, with lips gangrened with hellish cruelty, tell how each in turn did try to slay the Jewish race. What is the cause of this modern and this ancient antagonism? We do not know. With us it passes with a frown, but in the Orient,—smite upon their tombs, and call them forth! There is the record of their crimes —read! Let Egypt come, her hands laden with bricks that the Jews made without straw under the lash of her taskmasters! Let Assyria come and show us her swords wet with Jewish blood! Let Persia and Babylon stand forth, and clanking the chains they forged for Jacob's sons, tell us how in exile, in prison, and in bondage they tried to crush, to murder, that people, and—failed! Failed? Aye! They grappled as with an apparition. Their swords were broken as by an angel hand. Their chariots of war seemed to buffet with a whirlwind, and one by one these empires crept into their tombs, their eyes, like serpents, hissing undying hate,—and *Israel*, ISRAEL, *walked across their graves in victory!*

A new chapter is now before us.

Moses formulates a ceremonial system which expresses faith in God, sacrifice for

sin, an atonement and prayer for reconciliation. The moral elements of that ceremonial system flamed in the background of Christ's crucifixion.

Also, the Jewish priesthood is created. First, a warrior caste; then, as the representatives of the moral ideals of Israel. That priesthood seemed indestructible. It survived the Judges, guarded the thrones of David and Solomon, beheld the building of the Monarchies on the Euphrates, trod the ruins of the Babylonian, Assyrian and Greek empires, created chapters of history during the four hundred years between Malachi and John the Baptist, confronted Christ, defended the walls of Jerusalem when they were besieged by Titus, witnessed the downfall of Roman imperialism, and gazed into the Northland until it unfurled the national flags of modern Europe.

What is it that makes this man Moses, born under the shadow of the Pyramids, more gigantic than the Pyramids? It is what is called the Mosaic constitution! With this constitution he separates Israel from among world races, kindles it with a heaven-inspired morality, and projects that race into the sky of history,—and that for

one purpose, to morning-star the universal reign of God on earth. Hence this constitution.

It is a compact between God and a nation, a theocracy, the throne occupied by Jehovah and bowed before it the Jewish people as subjects. The people were to occupy the land and prosper, not because of an overshadowing wing of swords, but absolute obedience to God. Moses protects this monotheism, the reverence of one God, with ramparts of law and ceremonials. To worship the gods of other nations was treason. Sacrifices, national and individual, were instituted. The altar, like the flaming circle of noon, poured its radiance of love, thanksgiving, and atonement upon the people. The Sabbath was ordained to make the human will vibrant to the touch of morality. The caste system which dammed up the currents of social life was broken down. Slavery was so relieved of its evils that to be a slave in a Jewish family was better than to be a free man in Egypt. The destruction of babes was reduced to a crime. The purity of the Jewish maid and wife, the costliest gems in the tiara of national life, was defenced by punishments terrible to

contemplate. Polygamy, which made the shores of other nations foul and muddy, was slowly submerged in the crystal tides of social morality. Divorce was regulated. Life was esteemed so sacred that "Refuge Cities" were built for the accidental murderer.

This is Moses, Israel's first prophet, her first historian, her first poet, her first law giver. He was an Agitator, a Revolutionist, a Reformer, and a Liberator. He was the first to give mankind the supreme sense of duties, rights, and responsibilities, and the first statesman in the world to create a national soul. He lifted the earth out of its orbit and placed civilization upon moral axes. He taught human brotherhood, he sanctified law, he made marriage holy as a sacrament, he enthroned womanhood, he stripped the temples of their idols, brought God out from the mysterious depths of Pantheism, and placed in His hand the scepter of universal sovereignty.

Did you ever see Angelo's sculptured marble, his dream of Moses? It is the form of a giant, the brow massive as a tidal wave, the sockets of the eyes like the mouths of volcanoes, while upon the lips seem to rest

the thunders of Sinai. Angelo has sculptured this man seated in a chair, his face turned toward the future. Unlike the Egyptian Sphinx, which looks forever with scornful face upon the generations which live and die in its presence, the chair of Moses is like a throne of judgment, himself an archangel of earth's destiny, holding in his arms the tabled laws,—laws destined to be the criteria of civilizations, the inspirational music of the world's morality, the foundations of Christ's kingdom, and the prophecy of world-wide redemption.

Listen to his command, "Let the children of Israel go forward!" "Forward!" This the deathless cry of progress. Civilization henceforth is to be conditioned upon perpetual motion. Lacking this, Egypt perished. Upon Nebo yonder stands the great statesman jurist. He sees the people striking their tents. There is the Promised Land, but he cannot enter. We leave him there, to die, and to die alone,—the most majestic manhood that ever braved the wrath of Egypt's thrones.

The Book of Judges portrays the gulf of immorality into which Israel plunged. "There was no king in Israel, and every

man did that which was right in his own eyes." What banner now floats in that sky? The red flag of anarchy, which hath no stars. The times grew black as vows of treason. What preserved Israel during this night of lawlessness? One faith, one code of laws, and one sanctuary. It was Samuel who washed the heart of Israel with the snow of pure ideals. He hath the countenance of a priest. He is also the forerunner of the future prophets. As a seer and statesman he resembled Moses. He reestablished the state upon religion, and thus saved it from the grave.

Deborah, that magnificent impersonation of freedom, has chanted her grand epic. Samson and Gideon have changed from men to spectres. Then, as a sword and a shield of defense against the barbarians, the people demand a king, and the warrior Saul is diademed its first monarch. The sceptre descends to David, who drank the foam of battle like wine. In the midst of his wars David lays the foundations of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, what blessings, what curses, what virtues, what crimes, what tragedies have issued from thy gates! Art thou, great city of David, still an unfulfilled

prophecy? Will thy crown yet girdle the nations? Who can tell?

But it is not David the king, but David the poet, who compels our reverence. David was more splendidly harped than Shakespeare. Shakespeare is the monarch of the brain, David of the heart. Shakespeare thrills, David inspires. Shakespeare is for the scholar's study, David for the fireside. Shakespeare needs translation, through staged splendors of voice and pomp of circumstance; David speaks the language of the universal emotions which need no interpretation. Shakespeare describes the tragedies of men and of nations; David visions the tragedy of the human soul.

Hebrew poetry is as solitary as the race itself. It is picturesque as the night, yet thrilled with feeling as a human nerve; passionate as a conflagration and full of repose as a mountain; in strength, lion-like, yet a voice soft as woman's. Contrasted with the world poets, the Hebrew bard stands alone. The scream of Horace amid imperial vices is frightful, but after all it is a Roman protest. Juvenal lifts in his talons the Cæsars from their thrones, but that is

Latin cruelty. Homer poised yonder in the sky gazing down upon the carcasses of kings, belongs at last to a savage age. Though Dante walks through hell, he does not go beyond the regal vices of Italy. Even Shakespeare could not empty his thoughts of their English blood.

But the Hebrew poet,—the satire of Horace, the invective of Juvenal, the sublimity of Homer, the solemnity of Dante, the tragic verse of Shakespeare,—all these attributes belong to his genius. Search the Psalms of David! What emotion but is expressed, what passion but is echoed, what mood but is sounded? The human mind upon the desert of skepticism; the joy hours that make the mountains luminous; the dungeon of despair; the victory of faith; the midnight wrestling with temptation; the exaltation of religious devotion; the bridal chamber; the farewells of the dying;—for each experience in life a Psalm is tongued with sympathy. When the storm spirit puts the forest to its lips and blows a trumpet blast of anger, have you not heard its echoes in the imprecatory Psalms? Verses are there adorned in coronation robes. Others are sheeted in horror like the dead.

What triumphant music they have furnished the flame-wreathed martyr. Remember Cromwell stretching a Psalm into a war drum. Behold the verses eagle-feathered with the prophecies of a Messiah. Now and then you hear funeral anthems wailing in the distance. Here and there are magnificent recessionals, fitted for the cathedrals of all ages.

Hebrew poetry is not merely sublime as literature, or as a thousand-piped organ of the emotions. The poems of the Old Testament fling the questions of earth and time into the skies and the answers are written in as by a pen dipped in the volcanoes of the sun.

Take the Book of Job.

In the poetry of Job are stated the greatest problems and solutions that belong to the spirit life of man.

That poem contains but one great character,—it is Job himself.

He sums up the human race within himself and thinks! He voices the anguish of generations and weeps. He repeats the heart cries of the centuries. Men cannot understand him; so he talks to the desert. He pours out his complaint to the sea. He

argues with the whirlwind. He kneels there naked upon the sand, his lips festering with disease, asking God questions. Job is humanity in antiquity, standing in the dark pleading for light. He is humanity in despair. He passes from despair to skepticism and from skepticism to faith, and that is the history of the human race. How are his doubts solved? He makes friends with the Pleiades, and the divine forces that toil in the skies with intelligence, and learns that a knowledge of divine relationships is the great goal of all human effort and thinking. When Job rises from the desert in peace he represents humanity rising from the ignorance of the beast to a knowledge of God and of divine providences.

The Saxon Hamlet says, "To be or not to be, that is the question."

Job, the Oriental Hamlet, earthquakes the cemeteries of the world with that stupendous question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

The Saxon Hamlet is tempted by suicide to solve the problems of the soul. The Oriental Hamlet confronts the same temptation. You can hear the sneer of Job's wife,

"Curse God and die." Listen to his answer, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him."

There he kneels. lip deep in the desert sand. The night mocks him, the whirlwind stifles him. Nevertheless he gazes steadfastly into futurity. We do not know what he saw, but afar off in the centuries there was a cross tilted. At last he climbs to his feet, and there rolls from his lips the song of an archangel; he says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That single sentence has done more to comfort the dying generations since, than the gifts bestowed upon humanity by all the proud-voiced schools that belong to earth and time.

CHAPTER II.

PREPARATION FOR CHRIST THROUGH JUDAISM; THE PROPHETS.

It is yet centuries before Christ. Solomon's temple has become the storm centre of an hundred battlefields. Samaria is building, and Jericho is rising from the grave. Then Ahab is crowned. This vile toad, squatted upon the throne of Israel, bethought himself a king. Influenced by his heathen wife, Queen Jezebel, he stained the altars of Jehovah with bloody sacrifices to the sun god of the Phœnicians. Then there bursts upon the scene the first and mightiest prophet of all nations. It is Elijah! He is a whirlwind whelped by the desert. He is not a preacher; he is the national spirit, arraying itself single-handed against a world blasphemous with idolatry. He is an hero, a reformer, the great rebuker of crimes in high places! He lived in the age that birthed Homer, and his anger is terrible as the wrath of Achilles. David the Hebrew, pleading for repentance; Homer the Greek, pleading for progress, and Eli-

jah confronting Ahab with his rebuke of thunder,—this was the threefold genius that shook the nations.

Primarily, however, the Jewish prophet was the guardian of the Hebrew religion. It was a religion that welded Jew to Jew in loyalty, that gave the race solidarity unbending as Sinai, that painted its personality, that fashioned the genius of its great men, that atmosphered its literature, that moulded eras of progress, that saved it from the wreck of Oriental empires, that snatched it as a brand from the burning amid Roman conquest, that influenced other civilizations, but was unaffected by them,—a religion, the battlements of a race during thousands of years in the past, and reincarnated in Christianity, the divinity of the world through thousands of years in the future.

For each crisis in the life of Israel a prophet stood panoplied for action. There came a time when locusts cursed the earth. Besides, an army with spears like teeth crouched in the desert. Worst of all, the Jewish priests were as corrupt as drunken slaves. What can save the nation? Nothing that man can do. That is Joel's

message. His prophecy is spiritual. Let the people rend their hearts and not their garments. It is done. Already the prophet foresees the vision of God's spirit being poured upon all flesh. "Multitudes, multitudes, stand in the valley of decision." Joel is the flag of foreign missions folded into a man.

After Joel the ocean speaks. It is Jonah. He stood so high above his age that he has lost the form of man. Scholarship points to him as a tradition, a shadow! Yes, but a shadow volcanic with light! Behind the curtain of his speech great Nineveh shifted scenes of reveling for penitential tears. God used this man as a sword against race prejudice. He is the forerunner of Paul, an apostle to the Gentiles.

Between Joel and Hosea, stands Amos, his eye tearless as destiny. The world needed a new orbit. The sceptre was frozen with tyranny. In Bethel, at the king's summer palace, idols scorched and blistered the earth. Horrible social crimes transformed men into weeds and women into thorns. Behold then the prophet of retribution. The field has come to rebuke the city. Amos is the high executor of Judah's

rights. No escorting army reinforces his impeachment of civilization. He summons the nations to judgment. He tears a catalogue of thrones from the parchment of history: Damascus for cruelty, Gaza for torturing captives, Tyre for voluptuousness, Edom for savage lust, Moab for scarlet vice, and Israel for using the temple of idolatry for a winding sheet around Jehovah's altars. All are to be punished. It is a flaming panorama of God's judicial majesty, which shows partiality neither to men nor nations.

Then came a dangerous hour in history. Scorched already, Israel would not have tolerated a flame-tongued messenger. Was it not providential then that Hosea comes? He is the prophet of the emotions. His tears are like incense. The people wore the dangerous brow of mutiny, but he was irresistible. Had not his own wife sinned and unpalaced his joy; had he not rewedded her to his heart? Was it not natural, therefore, that from this, he should reason up to the infinite sweep of divine mercy? "God is love!" That message cured the apostate nation. Once more, like a potted plant in winter, it turned its leaves

toward the sun and flowered forth righteousness.

Deceived into false security by Assyrian promises of peace, Jerusalem once more degenerated until her brain seethed with crimes. The king, the nobles, the priests needed a prophet rather than the people, and there he stands, as many-sided as Jerusalem itself. He is a scholar, the historian of his age; a statesman, the rudder of the ship of state; a poet, worthy of rank with David; an aristocrat, dwelling in luxury; his tribunal lips are silvered with eloquence; his dignity compels the mitred priests to bow in his presence; his conscience, voiced with Sinai's thunders, rocks the throne with terror. It is Isaiah, the prophet of royalty, the prophet of the metropolis, the prophet of world kingdoms; among the prophets, the first evangelist. He addresses himself to the universe: "Hear, O earth; give ear, O ye heavens." The sins of man had infected nature; therefore he smites with woes the cedars of Lebanon, the oaks of Bashan, the high mountains. Jerusalem gloried in her title, "The Holy City." He smites the temples, the sabbaths, the new moons as idols. Into the

third gulf of woes he flings the cities themselves. The earth, the cities, religions have been slain. Then came the vision of the Messiah who shall rebuild. His voice breaks into music. He says the Messiah's name shall be called "Wonderful." There is a pause, and a loftier note falls to earth, "Counsellor." Then from the silence comes forth an appalling outburst, "The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father." Is he through? Not yet; he sees the end of battlefields, and cries, "The Prince of Peace." Then he retreats into his tomb with that tremendous, world-huge prophecy, "The government shall be upon his shoulders."

We come now to a period of Israelitish captivity. Nahum, too, stands among the bondsmen. But never was an exile more loyal to the fatherland. "O Judah," he cries, "keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows; emancipation is at the gates." Only yesterday this prophet had walked amid the ruins of Thebes. To him those crumbling palaces were more infamous than the flowers rotting upon a harlot's grave. From afar he sees the chariots of the Medes. They fill the air like wings. When they fight it

is not a battle; it is a pestilence. But he is not dismayed. He places a skeleton in his prophecy. That kingdom is ruined, because it has become a ditch of throne-kissing slaves. Then he uprolls the centuries and reveals the Messiah. "Behold upon the mountains, the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." That is the message of triumphant optimism.

When reformation is needed, where should it begin? In the church itself. When the church has become a wolf, stripping the flesh from the nation's bones, what kind of man is needed? A Luther! Habakkuk and Luther are mysteriously like each other. Like Luther's, what Habakkuk's eye beheld, his bribeless tongue preached. Like Luther's, Habakkuk's mind overtopped the age as a mountain does the plain. Finally it was Habakkuk who reached across the ages and gave to Paul, who from his tomb gave to Luther, that earthquake sentence, "The just shall live by faith." With that message Habakkuk resurrected Jerusalem,—then Luther took it and resurrected Christendom from the tomb of the dark ages.

If Habakkuk resembles Luther, Micah is

the prototype of Wendell Phillips. The times were similar. A hyena's snarl curled the lip of conservatism. The magistrates had degenerated. False prophets rooted beautiful intellects in foul bodies. Public virtues, like crumbling statues, lay in the dust. Then came the tribune of a new dispensation, Micah! The words melted from his lips in a fiery flood. Like Phillips he never mouthed the echoes of popular opinion. When the nations seemed most flourishing, then it was he chanted a mighty funeral dirge. To him, already these gorgeous capitals had vanished. Jerusalem, by her sins, had forfeited the right of being the Messiah's throne. Whence then shall come the victor? "From thee, O Bethlehem—least of the thousands of Judah." When the city fails, God shall consecrate the village for the world's deliverance.

The scene shifts, and we find the nations in a forward movement. The sword-handed Scythians have stepped from the sea as far as the Pyramids. The Medes have encircled Nineveh with battering rams. Yet the conscience of Jerusalem basely croaked a message of peace when there was no peace. Zephaniah brands this as treason. He

points to the morality of Jerusalem black as the brow of a forest. He scourges the times with whips of fire. Because Jerusalem has refused to share her treasures of truth, she shall sink into the sea of the nations; but her holy ideals shall globe the world with moral imperialism.

After these voices you hear a man weeping. It is Jeremiah. But his weeping is not like that of a man. It resembles more the sobbing of an archangel over a lost world. He pushes back the gray hairs which overhang his brow like an avalanche. He reviews the history of the nations. Then he marches his sentinel eyes around Jerusalem. He sees the Chaldeans like locusts rising from the desert. Jerusalem, that eagle, is hatching the serpent eggs of idolatry. The people shall be slain. Already the Egyptians are hastening to the carcasses like vultures. The vision fills him with horror. He yokes his neck a dumb prophecy. He calls himself "The Man of Sorrows." But his tears seem to have uncharged God's judgment of their lightnings. Suddenly from his prison cell of captivity he flings a beautiful promise. Jerusalem shall yet arise from captivity and become

the spiritual embassador of the nations. Marvelous old man! There he crouches in his tomb, waiting patiently until the processes of the ages shall vindicate his prophecy.

Daniel, a Babylonian scholar, is also the hero prophet. When did the anger of kings ever quell that trumpet of dread tidings? Amid days drunk with idolatry did he not stand like a human conscience, stripped of mortal clay On every side vices uncoiled, crested with splendor, like Egypt's basilisks. The people were only feathers in the wings of monarchs. Since he was educated in Chaldean literature, empires are portrayed as monsters. That is why his visions seem impossible of translation. Earth's kingdoms are webs, and in each he sees a human spider wearing a crown of gold. They pollute the ceilings of heaven. He tears them down. Behold what takes their place! A throne of flame, upon which an angel form is seated, having human personality. Daniel is the first to prophesy that the Messiah would be an interblending of heavenly and earthly natures. Before this "Ancient of Days" he sees adoring nations prostrate in worship and thanksgiving.

What prophet resembles Hamlet in tragic action? Ezekiel! Imagine a preacher using coffins for texts. Imagine a seer having his hair shorn as the type of threatened desolation. Imagine a reformer eating filth to describe the horrors of slavery. Imagine a prophet whose tears turn to blood as he listens to the rumbling wheels of on-coming judgment. This quadruple man was Ezekiel. His eyes faint with terror as he glances down upon Israel's threatened destruction. Therefore, he climbs the hill-tops of futurity. The visions there unseal his lips with prophecies. Judah is in bonds, but not the spirit of God. He beholds that spirit charioteered upon the four winds. It breathes upon the valley filled with the slain, and they live. What more? He gazes upon the cherubim, the everlasting gospels, the glory-girdled throne of salvation. Then his vision rends future ages, and he tells of the holy waters flowing from the temple, a brook, a river, a sea, measureless, boundless, the world-sweeping victories of Christ's kingdom.

Obadiah is a revolutionist. Why does he set on fire the rich blood of civilization? Because the Idumeans had not only trodden

Jerusalem in conquest, but had left behind a bloody trail of crimes. He breathes the feverish breath of insurrection into the stagnant veins of Jacob's sons, "Let Israel arise and Edom shall fall, though she hath built her nest in the stars!" Look at the hour of Obadiah's protest and promise. The Chaldean soldiers like serpents are crawling over the walls of cities. Nebuchadnezzar has already girdled Tyre with camp fires. This was the moment he elects to proclaim the triumph of Israel's theocracy. It will take long for this mountain to forge slime into granite, but it will come to pass. This new liberty will render crowned kings miserable spectres. Peace will one day chord every battle-axe with harp strings. Obadiah is the soul of democracy, waiting for its body to become the evangel of state-building peoples.

Haggai labors with Zephaniah in the resurrection of the temple. Without that temple Judah will be a skull, hideous to look upon. His speech, therefore, is full of warning, as a bell in foggy seas. His prophecy is buttressed with past experiences. Let Judah consecrate her gold and silver. Let the temple once more be per-

fumed with the prayers of multitudes. What then will happen? Israel shall *re-occupy* her place in the moral economy of the Orient and heathen nations will find her altars an everlasting blessing.

The new age demands a new prophet. It is Zachariah. His fiery judgments are fretted with golden mercies. Who can pierce the cloud that shrouds his face? What does he mean by kneeling amid Assyrian triumphs as if they were ash-heaps from charnel-houses? Zachariah has watched the hand of God writing in the confederacy of human events. Above his head flies a roll winged with curses. He overwhelmed the Jews with indignation. God is no longer the God of Israel. What is He? He is the universal God of righteousness and justice. He breaks as with a battle-axe the shell of Jewish exclusiveness, in order that its religion may become earth-wide and age-long. Then he tears the cloud from his face and stands upon his feet. He says, "The day is coming when holiness unto the Lord shall be written upon the bells of the horses!"

Many centuries have passed by, and because the Messiah had not yet climbed the

hills in bannered victory, the enthusiasm of the ages had put on the garb of winter. Malachi seemed, therefore, like spring born out of due time, beating its wings and foliage against prison walls of snow. It is the last great message of prophecy, but what an outreach of vision! First he says, "God is our Father;" second, "God will purge the sons of Jacob like gold and silver with fire." Then he concentrates the visions of a thousand years into that terrific outburst,— "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."

The Jewish prophet!

Eight hundred years of revelation streamed through his brain. He was not an oracle, whispering to the tune of bribes. He was not a soothsayer building predictions from the entrails of beasts. He was a seer, a statesman, a reformer, an historian, the critic of the world. All problems of men and of empires he measured in the flashlights of eternity. Every calamity and epoch-making event must have a cause. He searches for it in God's providences. The prophet's creed is simple: God is in history; He hath chosen Israel for His servant; such knowledge brings responsibility;

therefore moral indifference is a crime! Sometimes the whirlwind of his country's wrongs beats upon his heart and bursts it into flame. Sometimes he garbs himself in the nation's needs as in a soldier's uniform. Sometimes he is like the sky, greatest in the midnight hour of his country's despair. But always he is like Abraham, "The Friend of God!"

After the Old Testament has passed through the furnace fires of criticism, the prophetic *element* still remains unscorched. The Old Testament is the book of the angels. Prophetic voices that whisper in the first pages of Genesis unroll into thunder speech in the last pages of Malachi.

Not only were there prophets in the Jewish race, but the element of prophecy mysteriously relates itself to the people as a whole.

The smallest events are prophetic: The flood and the ark; Abraham upon Mount Moriah; Jacob's dream of a heavenly ladder; the serpent lifted in the wilderness; the fasting of Moses; the ordination of priests; the altar; the victim; the blood; the ark borne about through the years; the statutes; the imagery of the temple; battle-

fields where Israel conquers or is defeated; sacred tools; eras of bondage; the crowning of kings; the destruction of cities,—there is in the Old Testament a vast interblending of events and men so tragical in outline, in prophetic meaning, that we look and listen bewildered, amazed, overwhelmed with emotion.

I one time stood upon the inside of a great organ. As the musician touched the keys, the blocks of wood, piled up in layers, rose and fell in indescribable confusion, while peal on peal of harsh, discordant thunder shook the building. But when I stood without, the harsh notes became melodious as shepherd's flutes. The discords were mellowed into harmonies, and what seemed to be an African storm was transmuted into a symphony so triumphant, as if cherubs were chanting through the aisles an oratorio.

So with the Bible.

The skeptical ear, untuned to the philosophy of history, will find the Old Testament a discord, not a symphony. There, battle-chariots crash against overturned altars. Slave-chains at war with thrones. Poems like south winds suddenly breathe

across mountains of materialism. Brutish-faced idols mock at temples where the ark is and the golden cherubim.

But there is another view of the Old Testament.

Look at it from the hilltops of Matthew's Gospel. Then, how beautiful those aisles whose blood-stains here and there are sweet with memories of Israel's joy. Those columns like obelisks do stand, their marble pages sculptured deep with prophecy and psalm. Whence that music, whose unearthly notes, like spectre-smitten organ keys, do thrill with dread and grief and hope? Within yon shadow, vast and dim, is Sinai's Mount, and on its crest the prophets kneel, their bodies wrapped in night, their faces touched with dawn. O Ye Immortal Ones, earth knew ye not till time's unrolling judgment scroll did vindicate your words and tears that warned!

There moves a priestly throng, you hear a deep-toned chant. Where yonder harp-string sounds, a poet weeps. That altar in its flame some covenanted hope doth celebrate. That colossal moving shade is Israel in its weary march. While above,

around, the very air seems luminous and thrilled with angel presences and songs.

Never does the prophet's eye grow treacherous with skepticism. The Jewish prophets did not hesitate to contradict the very processes of history. They foretold absolutely the calamities of Israel and of surrounding nations from Abraham to Christ, and horoscoped the personality of the Messiah, the nature of His kingdom, its earth-wide conquests, and the closing chapters of the world. He stood alone in a world filled with idols, and cried, "Hear, O earth, there is but one God."

These prophets are men, but they seem to have wings. Instead of speech you hear mysterious cries that no man can comprehend. When they see the peril of Israel's downfall into materialism, they turn their faces like suns upon the ocean, and drawing up mists and clouds, they roll them across the sky of Israel's future in judgment warnings. The prophet used his stake of martyrdom like a battle-axe and swung it against despotism. He plucked up the fire-brands kindling at his feet, and hurled them into the future. To scaffold

one of those high thinkers was to lift his thought into the sky. To scatter his dust was to scatter his ideas. Humanity was a famished tiger. The prophet flung himself into those angry jaws to satisfy humanity's hunger for God, righteousness and redemption.

What immense personalities! Nothing could thwart their sublime purposes. They clasp hands across centuries, and keep step with the drums of God for man's redemption. If one falters another leaps forward and picks up the burden. They succeed each other like different swells of music, but there is only one symphony. A patriarch is followed by a law-giver, the law-giver is succeeded by a dreamer, the dreamer by a poet, the poet by a king; then, in the footsteps of the king a city flings its battlements in the air, and crouched at the city's gates are lion-voiced prophets. But each of these prophets supplements some other, corrects, improves, enlarges, working at different angles upon a fabric concealed even from their eyes. But the temple was rising toward the sky. No sound of tool or noise of hammer, the foundations buried in the past, the walls gleaming in the ages; here

a column is lifted, and there an arch is sprung, but always rising higher and higher, throwing its glories farther and farther, spreading its influence wider and wider, and under the touch of countless voices, under the touch of countless hands, there glows upon the vision of Israel the dream of a golden age!

But that is not wonderful,—every nation has had that dream. But the Jewish prophet's dream reversed all others. What, for example, was the golden age of the Roman Empire, sung by its poets and realized by its Cæsars? A golden age was prophesied when a great city should rule the world; a time when glorious architecture should adorn the streets; a time when sages should speak and poets sing; a time when men and women should be clad in costly raiment and revel in banquets. That time was realized. When Augustus Cæsar sat upon the throne, a golden milestone was driven into the earth,—the golden age had come! What was the Jewish dream? Simply a time when, *Every man, woman and child in the world* SHOULD BE CLOTHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS!

These prophets are universal men. Yes-

terday they dictated the policy of the Jewish race. To-day they umpire the moral destinies of the world. They stride about the legislative halls of Washington city. They fold their wings in every capital of Europe. They walk the ramparts of civilization, doing sentinel duty. Every political institution of modern times bears the finger prints of their minds. They are the elder brothers of the Apostles. It was Moses and Elijah who communed with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. They are to-day more powerful for righteousness, justice and liberty than the combined armies, navies and parliaments of earth. Thrones, like tombs, make shadows. The tombs of the prophets blaze with light.

The skeptic confronts an historical dilemma that the sword of an Alexander cannot cut in angry caprice. The prophets and Christ belong together. To deny this is not argument. Submit the counter facts.

Examine the chapters of American and European annals, and name one epoch in which there is any hint of a prophecy, even approximately terminating in a personality yet to be born. Compare four hundred

years of American history and four hundred years recorded in the Old Testament, and no further demonstration is necessary. Whether the prophecies terminate in Jesus Christ is not imperatively insisted upon now,—the skeptic must concede, *apparently*, that they do. But the doctrine of mathematical probabilities will not permit us to say that this is an accident. Centuries and centuries of history never culminate in a coincidence. That the prophecies of the Old Testament do culminate in Jesus Christ is the affirmation of twenty centuries of Christian scholarship.

Account for this overpowering legion of men and historical events preceding and predicting the Messiah. The law of cause and effect is not in evidence. The prophets of the Old Testament were created by the vision of a coming Messiah. If this be true, we confront another miracle of history.

It was the Messianic vision and nothing else that overwhelmed the Jewish prophet. First, he is described as the ideal man. Then to the amazement of the watchers he becomes fairer than the sons of men, the chief among ten thousand. For a moment

He disappears. The clouds and darkness hide Him in their pavilion; then, the gates lift up their heads, the everlasting doors are opened, and He is seen vestured and enthroned, "The king of glory!" The angels are given charge concerning Him; Mount Zion beholds His coming and is glad; the nations advance to greet this Shiloh of redemption, and, interpret as you may those astounding words, the scholarship of the civilized world attests, that He who walked the mysterious depths of those prophecies, afterward, — clothed in flesh and blood,—trod the storm-swept waves of Galilee!

The story is done! Three years of ministry, a bribed disciple, an arrest at midnight, Pilate washing his hands of guilty blood, a cross swaying in the darkness, an earthquake, and a burial!

At last, human history unrolls its vast scroll! The stupendous past is ablaze with light! The voices of the prophets swell into thunder-peals of triumph! Mount Sinai kneels before Mount Calvary! The Occident takes the place of the Orient in the march of the ages, and there, and there, and

there, seated upon the world's thrones, is the Christ, the revolutions and reformations of twenty centuries, the wonders of modern civilization, attesting the glories of his triumphs. Prophet, Priest, King,—all hail! "THE WONDERFUL!"

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST CONTRASTED WITH THE SCHOOLS.

On Socrates' death day, Crito, his disciple, came to visit him and Socrates asked Crito—"Crito, what time of day is it?"

Crito answered, "It is very early in the morning."

Socrates said, "Crito, tell me the exact time."

Crito answered, "Sir, the dawn is breaking."

The dawn is breaking.

Little did this Greek know that he prophesied. The dawn was breaking. In Judea the clouds were, like unrolling prophecies, emerging from the depths of the centuries. The hills and mountain summits, like broad-browed seers and prophets, were looking wistfully down into the future. Socrates had been the dawn of a new day for the intellect of Greece. Jesus of Nazareth was to be the dawn of the soul-life of humanity.

Christ began life in a manger in order to gather up the rejected elements of the social world. The silences in His life are like

those of great forests. We know little of His childhood days. There is a hint of a modest home. Joseph, the father of the family, was a Puritan in character. Mary, the mother, was like an Æolian harp, susceptible to holy influences and of extraordinary poetic gifts. The song upon her lips hath in it the deep swell of the anthem John heard in heaven.

The world's map at this hour seemed upside down. Athens, the brain of the world, had carved upon its streets an altar, "To the unknown God." The Gentile nations through this altar tendered confession of absolute ignorance of God. In Jerusalem religion was spelled in terms of the temple, a priesthood and ceremonial. It did not mean life. Judah had lost its sceptre, and with it the hope of mastering the world. Malachi had been dead four hundred years, and no prophetic voice had broken the loneliness of those centuries. In Nazareth, Jewish humanity had sunken into pitiful degradation. The sneer, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" is the proof of the undone and lost condition of the people.

His quotations from the Old Testament

showed familiarity with its pages. But whatever His education, it was of the most meager character. This is proved by the question of the people who knew Him, "Whence knoweth this man letters, never having learned?" A mechanic as a world teacher had never before been known in history.

He was not educated by the Pharisees. They represented legalism—the loveless letter of the law. It was a school built of numberless statutes and speculations. They repudiated His teachings because they could not understand His message.

He was not educated by the Sadducees. They were the skeptics of their time. They denied everything supernatural. They bowed their knees only to moral theories. They worshipped nothing but tradition. There is nothing in Christ reflecting the spirit of this school.

The third school was that of the Essenes. They were mystics. They were the intellectual aristocrats of their times, but there is nothing in common between Christ and these sages.

These were the three schools of the Jewish race. They combined against Christ.

Not one claimed Him. There is not a thread of evidence that Christ ever spent one day in any one of these centres of Jewish culture. Besides that, Christ was a carpenter, and the poverty of a carpenter's home would not permit of a priestly education.

The New Testament narrative states these simple facts: First, we see a babe in a manger; a few years later, a boy in the temple; then follow the years of darkness. The curtain lifts and nearly thirty years have passed away. We see Him leaving the carpenter's bench and He begins to preach.

If Jesus were an educated man, we might look for contemporaries. The famous Greeks were dead. Save one or two, the great Romans were dead. Not one Jewish intellect honored to-day by scholarship was in the world. But it may be said that their teachings were known. Search the manuscripts of Rome, Athens and Jerusalem,—examine their philosophies, their poetry, their morals,—and you will find no traces of the materials He used during His public ministry. No man can escape mirroring in his teaching the trend of thought taught him. Now take the Sermon on the Mount. It is not Jewish, nor Greek, nor Asiatic.

Nor is the faintest trace of scholasticism discernible. Beyond that sermon are three tombs. One contains the wisdom of Athens, the second, the statesmanship of Rome, and the third, the schools of Jerusalem. His sermon builded those tombs. They are like Pyramids; we climb them, we explore them, we admire them, but we refuse to live in them.

The history of the world reveals that only educated men have ruled its destinies. Jesus Christ, the carpenter, is the solitary exception to this universal rule.

India's greatest prince, who became Buddha, established a religion that afterwards dominated a third of the world's millions. He was born in a palace. One day the corpse of a beggar resolved him to meditate upon the nobler things of life. He left the palace. He studied under the priests of India. He formulated a theory of life, gathered unto himself multitudes of disciples, and died of old age.

Confucius of China had in his veins the blood of a race of emperors. At fifteen he was a school teacher. Later he studied in the royal libraries. He gathered three thousand disciples, among them nearly an hun-

dred scholars of superb ability. Under him they studied history, poetry, philosophy, and religion. Confucius girded China with a moral theory beautiful as bronze, and as flexible. He also died of old age.

The tradition regarding Zoroaster of Persia is, that he was its greatest seer and gave to his disciples the noblest thoughts of his times.

We know that Moses was educated in the brilliant colleges of Egypt, and Plato in the equally splendid schools of Greece. Both died of old age.

Jesus died approximately at the age of thirty-three. He died at the age when these master world-builders had not even begun their careers.

He came forth of His own accord and assumed a public position. Note how many-sided He is. He resembles in His methods a captain of the Salvation Army. He preaches upon the street corners to the common people. Sometimes, like Socrates, He engages in discussion with a representative of the schools. Again there is the hint of the Jewish Rabbi,—He uses parables. Occasionally, like a High Priest, we find Him in the temple. He discusses moral

theories like a Roman Seneca. He is independent in His teaching as a scientist of the twentieth century.

He apparently cares nothing for sacred days or holy places. From the porch of the temple, upon a mountain summit, or from a fishing-boat pushed from the shore of the sea, He addresses Himself in one breath to His disciples, in the next to the multitudes.

There is nothing local about Him. Types, races, civilizations collapse in His presence. He is the great solitary of history. He had disciples but no associates. Your associate is your peer. Jesus of Nazareth had no peers, nor is there a man in the world now who would have the moral hardihood to claim to be His equal.

Charles Lamb one time said to a group of scholars: "Gentlemen, if Shakespeare should come into the room we would rise to our feet, but if Jesus Christ came in, we would get down upon our knees." That is the profound distinction between Christ and the great men of earth. We cheer the names of great men; men weep in the presence of Christ.

We first meet this mysterious personality as a Jewish Rabbi. He uses the Oriental

method, parables. Each parable is simple as a cottage, with as many gorgeous rooms as a palace. Each parable is serious, dignified, unembellished, universal in application, exhaustless in interpretation.

Some of the parables like angel hands swing back the marble gates of the cemetery, and in one swift glance is revealed some of the vast secrets of eternity. Take the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, for example. Others are prophecies requiring centuries for fulfillment. The parable of the Prodigal Son is not overdrawn. It is a picture of home life that many know, out of a heart-rending experience. But if the prodigal means the Gentile world that had wasted its moral substance in riotous living, that is, in building civilizations, subserving material ambitions; if the elder brother in the parable is the Jewish race folded in the sneering Pharisees, that parable becomes a key which unlocks the religious history of mankind.

He is uniformly courteous. He treats a leper with the kingly grace he does a Nicodemus. Pessimism never clouds His view of human nature. Nothing seems premeditated, yet truth never falls from His lips

unripe. The most accidental sentence will bear the profoundest tests of scholarship. He never reserves a great truth for a special occasion. He told the Samaritan woman truths worthy an audience of Plato's. He anticipates no debate, He never argues. He is not an attorney. He does not plead. His thought is regnant, it commands! And every utterance has the solemnity of a supreme court decision,—it is final.

He never declaims. He employs no rhetoric. His irony never degenerates into a sneer. Each sentence is a climax. He expounds no theories. He does not speculate. Everything is simple, familiar, conversational, the atmosphere of scholarship wholly lacking. He discusses the sublimest truths as easily as we prate about the weather. Nothing is tainted with the acid of policy or prejudice. Nothing is left in the form of a half truth.

He does not state simply, "Ideas," or, "Personal opinions." He never says, "if," "possibly," " perchance," "I think," "it is my conviction," "I hope,"—He is never in doubt! It was said con-

cerning Him, however, "He spake as one having authority."

The Jewish prophet always affirmed, "Thus saith the Lord." Where did Christ get the authority to say, "I say unto you"? Who gave this carpenter authority to lay the Mosaic law under His feet, and say, "A new commandment I give unto you"? Age did not give it, He was youthful in years. The people never elected Him to be their tribune. He was not the spokesman for a priesthood. He did not speak for conscience' sake. He was not the champion of any party, sect or school. He even declared that no one had authority but Himself. Where did He get that authority?

He was a preacher. What was His text? Himself! Every conversation, sermon and exhortation centers in Himself. Ask Him of any law, rule of conduct, the mystery of man's nature, or of God's nature, He offers Himself as the solution. His attitude toward men describes all we know of "Brotherhood." His freedom is the true doctrine of liberty. The limitation of His action is the boundary of human rights. He offers no formal analysis of religion. He

assumes that His life is the new temple, therefore a complete definition. His deeds are flesh, covering bones of doctrine. What is philanthropy? What is self-denial? What is humility? What is temperance? What is holiness? All these problems in morality and religion find their solutions in His personality. "What would Jesus do?" Answer this question and you instantly solve every moral dilemma that belongs to the individual, the family, the state and the world in all their multitudinous inter-relationships. Also, these solutions constitute the nervous system of the universal truths of the ages. They harmonize with the noblest reason of mankind.

If Jesus had been educated by the schools, He would have labored among cultured people. His vocabulary would have glittered with technical terms. He would have abandoned Himself to speculation, propounded a logical system, and combated counter theories.

But here we stand in the presence of contradictions: His disciples were fishermen; His sermons were delivered without apparent preparation; He does not elabo-

rate a system; He does not attack the schools of His time; He writes no books; He quotes no authorities. On the contrary, He teaches as if no scholars, priests or statesmen were in the world. He speaks as though His words were the first that humanity had ever heard and would also be the last.

Had he been trained by the schools, His opponents would have charged Him with insolence, for pretending to know more than His masters. On the contrary, they upbraided Him for attempting to explain the Scriptures without having been taught.

Take Christ's denial of authority. He denied the authority of His mother. He denied the authority of orthodoxy represented by the priests. He denied the authority of the past represented by Moses.

The skeptic must account for Christ's education. He says, "His mother taught Him." A poor Jewish peasant woman? Impossible! To affirm that He studied books is equally incredible. Only kings could afford libraries. The poverty of a carpenter's home would not permit the purchase of costly manuscripts. To say He

traveled and came in contact with learned minds, is an assertion without proof. Where did He go? He quotes no one.

The skeptic says, "He brooded upon the problems of His soul-life." But this is an intellectual absurdity upon the theory that Christ was simply a man. To analyze even the laws of thinking requires profoundest scholarship. To classify the laws of the soul-life is a task that no school in the world ever attempted. When skeptics ask us to believe that a young Jewish carpenter, exhausted after the day's toil, investigated and discovered the solutions that belong to the soul here and in futurity, is again to ask us to deny one miracle and accept theirs. Ask a lawyer and he will tell you that the testimony of the common people is always overwhelming, because it represents unbought evidence. The people knew Him intimately. The indignant questions flame from scores of tongues, "Is not this the carpenter?" "Whence hath this man letters, never having learned?" In other words, they questioned His right to teach, because He had never gone to school. They knew it. They knew Him from infancy.

Go to a lawyer with a case of supreme

importance, or to a physician, and each will ask for time to consult authorities and get expert opinion before pronouncing judgment. The Pharisees, to bring Him into disrepute with the multitude, tried to impeach His witness. They brought Him carefully prepared dilemmas. These dilemmas are such marvels of skill that if He assents to either alternative, He is undone. He does not ask His disciples their opinion regarding the question at issue. He does not ask for time to consult Moses and the prophets. The question is asked, the answer is given at once. Questions are asked involving great social, political and moral relationships. The common people questioned Him. The Pharisees questioned Him. The Scribes, the Lawyers, the Priests—they thronged Him with questions. At once the answer is given, without hesitation, without employing the logical processes of reason which we must use,—and the answer lies now upon that written page, and the scholarship of twenty centuries has never been able to lay its finger upon a solitary answer and say, "That answer is wrong!"

He builds His doctrines on the things that belong to earth. Salt, light, lilies,

bread, water, birth, fig-trees, sunsets, grass, mountains,—He compelled the universe of things to expound spiritual truths. Other teachers built their doctrines upon axioms, proverbs, man's intuitions, logic,—but no one before ordained nature to preach in the pulpit, sermons on life, duty, responsibility, providence, prayer, immortality and judgment.

He taught so simply that we send children to Sabbath School to study His thought. But His pictures, or parables, which please and teach the children, contain such profound truth that you cannot find two scholars in the world who will agree in the spiritual meaning of the same parable.

One day the disciples said, "Master, teach us to pray." He at once uttered perhaps a dozen sentences, nearly all of them you find in the Old Testament. He put them into combination, and it is now called, "The Universal Prayer." We have repeated that prayer as individuals, as families, as churches, for centuries. We have never exhausted its meaning.

When He said, "Our Father in Heaven," how are we to understand that? We can-

not reason by analogy from a human father to a divine Father, because the finite affords no possible basis for reasoning up to the infinite. When He said, "Thy kingdom come," what is there among the governments of earth to reveal any suggestion of the political vision He had in His mind? When He said, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," what do we know about the jurisprudence of the skies? What are the statutes that control the conduct of angels? When He said, "Give us this day our daily bread," what did He mean? We assume that bread is the symbol of our material wants, and we should ask God to supply our earthly needs.

But there is a deeper meaning. Take that prayer upon the forum of the Roman Empire, in that period known as the golden age: "Our Father who art in Heaven." In the pronouncement of that sentence, behold the temples filled with gods and goddesses vanish from the earth! "Thy kingdom come." In the presence of this sentence,—that Lion, the Roman Empire, which held the world in its fangs, begins to sink into death. "Thy will be done." The schools of the Stoics and Epicureans, schools which

had ruled generations, creep into their graves. "Give us this day our daily bread!" Here is the genesis of a new earth. The causes of the divisions between peoples, of the chasm between the classes and the masses, of the strife between capital and labor, of the tragedy between riches and poverty, find in this sentence their death-knell. The sentence belongs to the whole prayer. Push it backward. "Give us this day our daily bread, according to the laws of Thy kingdom which is in Heaven, according to Thy will as wrought in Heaven, hallowing Thy name, O God, our Father." When men earn bread according to the spirit of that prayer, the kingdom of heaven will have descended upon earth.

Humanity did not know how to pray until He uttered that petition. The world did not even know how to reverence God; it did not know what devotion meant. Mighty as were the Greeks in expression, Greek scholars never presumed to teach mankind the method of approaching God in worship.

In all the sculpture of the Greeks there is not a solitary piece of marble revealing the sentiment of devotion.

Place the picture of "The Angelus" amid the glories of Athenian art, and it stands alone. Venus is more beautiful than that unlovely woman with her hands clasped. Apollo is more splendid than that farmer who stands with head uncovered in the plowed field. But analyze that painting. The artist is not trying to portray an ideal human form. He purposes to put upon canvas, man's deepest devotional hour, the hour of prayer. There stands the human race, summed up in man and woman. There is a field all written over with the divine command, "By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." That field is one of the noblest portrayals of the dignity and divinity of toil the world has ever seen. There labor is ideal. It has been made radiant with hope and with faith, and from the still luminous sky seem to fall benedictions. What matters it that the forms of the two peasants are uncouth and angular, their faces seared with care, and bronzed with the sun? Above the harsh clods, above the labor-worn bodies of man and woman, there bends a sympathetic sky. How softly those lights blend! What tenderness of color is reflected in the deepening glow of

the landscape! A beautiful sunset mingles with the shadows crossing the field, suggestive of the exquisite and transfiguring hope of immortality, while through the enriched and deepening twilight you can almost hear the tones of the Angelus bell from the distant tower.

Upturn the soil now, and bring to us the noblest marbles of Greece, the sculptured dreams of pagan gods! Bring to us the genius of Phidias, the far-splendoring triumphs of brush and chisel! Pile Sphinx and Pyramid upon Mount Olympus, and let those marble and granite prodigies of art relive amid our times. Now place among them all the Angelus, and humanity attests, that the human soul at prayer is a more wonderful portrayal of spiritual devotion than all the crowned and radiant glories of the Olympian gods.

It was Christianity that made the Angelus possible, since Christianity taught humanity how to pray.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST CONTRASTED WITH THE SCHOLARS.

He one time said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church." The Roman Catholic hierarchy has reared itself haughtily upon that and the correlated sentences. Protestant scholars of nearly four centuries have said, "Rome is wrong." Is it reasonable that a Jewish carpenter could utter a sentence that could divide modern scholarship into two hemispheres?

His teachings are unaffected by climate, age, science, civilization. On the other hand, His teachings affect men of every climate, of every race, of every civilization the same way. That is to say, the religion of Jesus Christ tabernacled in the Esquimau, the Negro, the Anglo-Saxon, the Occidental and the Oriental, has the same moral effect in the enrichment of character. Christianity unwarps racial differences as easily as fire purges gold of dross.

He differs from statesmen, philosophers and great religious teachers in this: He

gave the same doctrines to savage and to civilized man. He did not modify dogma to suit an era of culture. Also, He is responsible not only for what He said, but for the logical sequence of His thoughts. No statesman is willing to be held responsible for an inference. No theologian is willing to be responsible for the conclusions of a doctrine. But no difference what disturbance, revolution, or reformation may be predicted in the literal interpretation of Christ's kingdom, or the logical sequences of its laws,—though there be threatened from the view-point of statesmanship an almost universal insurrection, the disruption of states, or the upheaval of civilization, nevertheless, Jesus of Nazareth is responsible.

No school has risen in nineteen hundred years and has been able to maintain its intellectual existence, by teaching doctrines contrary to His. Every skeptic has taught many things that are good and true and beautiful. But no skeptic has been able to teach any moral law, principle, or truth that will stand every test but can be found rooted in some utterance from the lips of Christ.

Wherein does Jesus differ from scholars? Wise men study causes. They peer into nature's secrets. They try to tabulate the laws of thought, They speculate dreamily upon the mysteries of life, and of death. But Christ never observes nature's methods as does the scientist. He does not attempt to discover the laws of thought as did Aristotle. The beauties of the physical world never once charmed His lips into poetry, as it did David's. He does not theorize about life, nor place fingers, fearful and trembling with curiosity, upon the sealed doors of the tomb.

The wisest men have been compelled to leave some problems simply stated. They were unable to furnish the solution, and frankly said so. They died, hoping that some succeeding generation would answer the questions they could not. For example: "What is man?" "Who and what is God?" "Is there a future life?" Here are the three unexplored realms of human investigation. The scientist, the philosopher, the priesthoods of all religions have walked to the edge of these measureless circles of mystery and paused. But within the circles, untrodden by mortal genius, we

find the footprints of Christ. The only answers to these questions that the world accepts as final, are those He furnished. His explanations of God, of life, of death, of judgment, of immortality, stand as He left them. The universities of the world have not added nor subtracted one syllable.

Did you ever stand upon a mountain-top in the night after a storm? The darkness then is tragical with a threefold horror. To the eye it is blindness; to the ear it is silence; to the mind it suggests doubt. Fling into the tempest these questions: "Do men still live? Is the earth still in its place? Has chaos taken the place of order?" The night says in answer, "I do not know." But suddenly a mysterious hand thrusts from the cloud a flaming torch. In that swift blaze of lightning, fields are unmasked, a village reveals its white face, while landscapes, horizons and forests are unshrouded in awful majesty. The wind blows out that torch, and again you are in a death-struggle with that triple-headed skepticism, blindness, silence and doubt. Was the vision a delusion, or was it real? Who will answer? The morning! The dawn is the angel of truth, it will tell! In

the night and storm of life, human reason is the lightning flash. It says concerning the solutions of the soul, "I hope these things are so."

Christ is the witness of the eternal morning. He says, "*We speak of things we know!*"

Every sage and teacher has been able to proclaim doctrines beyond the reach of personal realization. Pity, mercy, love thy neighbor, are teachings old as humanity, yet no one ever pretended to actualize these teachings until Christ came. In order to practice these virtues, we must imitate Christ's life, not the life of Plato, or of Seneca, or of Moses.

Who can imitate Plato? Is not Seneca as unapproachable as a volcano under the sea? The prophets of Israel, like chariots of fire, circle around the mountain personality of Moses. Has Moses ever been duplicated? Christ is unattainable, but He is also within the range of the millions. That is the miraculous paradox. The unattainable Christ may be attained.

He was equally wonderful in what He did not teach. No student but has tried to master some truth in the realms of science,

art, poetry, politics, statesmanship,—but Christ never uttered a syllable upon any of these themes.

He never said a word about science, but the Christianity of Christ is so inclusive, it makes room for every new fact of science. It has never suffered injury from any discovery of science. Theology has. Theology is a man-made system. But the Christianity of Christ has undergone no modification in twenty centuries. The reforms that have occurred within the Church have been inaugurated, simply because of a clearer perception of the spirit of Christ. If the Christianity of Christ were allowed to act naturally, unhindered by prejudice, greed, and selfishness, not a scientific discovery or invention would leap from the brain of genius, but would be used for the highest moral interests and material enrichment of the human race.

He said not one word about poetry, but the poems of the last twenty centuries that have influenced humanity, that helped create the modern world, are threaded with the gold of His teachings.

He said nothing about art, but under the influence of Christianity, architecture has a

new ideal, the Cathedral. It is built in the shape of the cross upon which Christ died. Take the Pyramids of Egypt, the Pantheon of Athens, the temple of Jupiter in Rome, and a European Cathedral. Contrast the influence upon art to-day of each of these types with the influence of the Cathedral.

Jesus of Nazareth is also the music-soul of the modern world.

He said nothing about politics, as we understand that phrase. Yet His teachings are moulding the political destinies of the human race. Political economy, international law, arbitration to take the place of war, sociology,— here are four new sciences. As sciences, they had no existence before He appeared.

To Him, problem and solution were parts of one anthem. Jesus Christ left behind Him no interrogation points. Since He came, the skies have lost their strangeness. The divine presence is seen, is felt, in the deep woods and in the soft glow of midnights. The springtime is a poet, summer is a scarlet-robed Cardinal, and winter preaches to us like a prophet.

Beethoven's funeral dirge contains here and there a note of triumph. Death is no

longer a Sphinx. We robe the dead in royal vestments of floral splendor, and instead of despair, we whisper the beautiful German farewell, " Until we meet again."

Take the Sermon on the Mount. In the shoreless realms of literature, there is nothing like this. Its simplicity is that of a brook wandering aimlessly through a meadow. Its ocean depths have never been sounded. We could better afford to have the sky emptied of its suns than lose the truths orbed in that firmament of speech. It is the profoundest philosophy, yet there is not in it the hesitancy of speculation. It states quite all the truths of morals, and that, without argument. It is not logical, but in every line, you hear the regal voice of authority. It is not a statesman's manual, yet lies at the foundation of modern civilization. It is addressed to neither sex, but includes both. It applies equally to the individual, to the race, or to humanity.

That sermon is Christ's photograph of Himself.

A man modifies his creed with increase of knowledge. The mature mind repudiates gilded youthful notions. Christ never altered a single sentence. Nor can you dis-

cover a trace of increasing wisdom in any of His teachings. His first utterances are as sky-deep as His last words upon the cross.

The wisest man, in his effort to teach mankind, has in some unguarded moment set forth a doctrine that led to vicious results.

But this is not a description of Christ. When He came, plans had been tried and failed. He apparently knew nothing of them. But His solutions are not at the expense of any race, tribe, or individual, or of any age or condition, whether of naked savagery, or a civilization vestured with centuries of achievements, and a forest of universities.

Nothing that Christ said or did, actually or inferentially, has the brain of these centuries pronounced worthless, suspicious, visionary, injurious, dangerous, or age-worn, and therefore out of date. Instead of being twenty centuries in the past, He continually hails us from the midst of centuries far away in the future.

The disciples of other men have climbed to heights of wisdom and influence equal to their masters, and often surpassed them.

But no disciple of Christ, nor one of His enemies, has ever claimed to set aside the moral authority of Jesus Christ on the ground of intellectual or moral superiority.

The trite and well-known question of the Christian man who says to the skeptic, "Whom will you substitute for Jesus Christ?" is really the heart of the question. Whenever skepticism can affirm a greater than Christ is here, then only will we turn our allegiance from the Man of Nazareth.

Wise men need interpreters. Their sayings are dark. They state truths in fragments. Their disciples must walk behind and apologize with explanations, add definitions, and reconcile differences. But Christ's word was so simple that the common people heard Him gladly and do to-day. A Salvation Army captain can preach Christ's word with quite the effectiveness of a theologian.

No great man ever dared array his teachings against the moralist, the priest, the king, the civilization of his times, as Christ did. He rebuked all of these, then held up His own life as the model for each one.

Of scholars, what the man says, is inde-

pendent of himself. To understand a man's teaching we do not need to know the man. It is not necessary to know anything of the personality and spirit of Moses, or of Confucius, or of Buddha, to understand their teachings; but with Christ, the condition of understanding what He said, is a knowledge of His spirit and personality, in the most tender and loving relation as a disciple.

That makes it a moral impossibility for the skeptic to discuss Christianity intelligently. Christianity is not a theological system,—Christianity is Christ; and not to know Christ is to fail to understand Christianity.

We are the living witnesses to these facts. The world to-day measures the principles of Buddha, Confucius, Plato, Moses, by compelling them to parallel the teachings of Christ. Whether what the ancients said was morally true or not is tested by weighing their words against the contents of the Gospels. The thought of Jesus Christ is the crucible test of all moral and religious truth just as His life is the moral test of all life.

The scholar announces only one side of a doctrine. For example, Plato was the founder of Idealism. Aristotle, his pupil,

antagonized this theory and taught Realism. Take Calvin and Wesley as types of mind who saw the same truth from different angles. But it has never occurred to any scholar to teach the opposite to any moral principle that Christ taught.

Every university is an altar step leading to the skies. The skies! What lies beyond that silence? The stars, like sentinels, keep their swords unsheathed, challenging us to lay siege to the hidden city. Only one gate is ajar. It is the grave. But again we pause. To peer over the ramparts of futurity we must enter that gate. Alas, mortal man shrinks back.

To listen to the whisper freezing upon the lips of the dead, to look in the direction where a snowy finger points, to see in the glazed eye a map of futurity, to read upon the torn page of that pulseless body a message from the skies,—who can do all this?

The dead! Upon that brow, a veil white with mystery, is stretched, while underneath, an unearthly glow is seen as if a distant dawn had kindled there and died. Those eyes half shut, like suns eclipsed, unfold a dark so wide, so deep, that earth seems sinking into night.

The air seems touched with fainting echoes of far-off songs, but none can catch those wild half notes that thrill and vanish in a breath.

The winds that stoop to kiss that cheek, then touch yours, stifle the heart's quick beat as though dread wings had swept your face and then passed on.

Only one thing we know,—the dew congealed upon that brow foreheralds this: that for that one a new day hath dawned, here, there, somewhere, we cannot tell. To the sane mind, death is a horror because we know not its meaning.

But to Jesus of Nazareth life and death were equal. He was as serene in his affirmations about the world beyond as He was about the world here. Death was not an untranslated mystery to one who could say, with the last breath, "It is finished." Life and death were chapters in one book. He understood both.

Here is one limitation of genius: A man, no difference how wise he is, does not understand himself. Socrates said, "Know thyself;" but Socrates did not know himself. The supreme mystery of earth is human personality. Again we see the supernatural

in Christ. He knew Himself perfectly. He lived alone, existing for Himself, in a manner infinite and absolute. In moments of ecstasy, He utters no shout of triumph. In suffering, there is no hesitation, skepticism, or despair. These are necessary pages in His life; He knows their causes and results.

He swept his eye over the past and said, quietly, "Before Abraham was, I am." That is, He was the cause and the final cause of history. He gazed upon His present struggles and said, "Thus it behooveth the Son of Man to suffer, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled." He identified His tears with centuries of prophecy. Then He fixed His eye upon futurity. He saw the end of the world and Himself seated upon the throne of God, as Judge of men and Sovereign of angels.

He built no schools, erected no institutions, formulated no creed, gave forth no set of rules, ordained no priests, fashioned no ceremonies, founded no government, set apart no sacred days, destroyed no party or sect, employed no weapons of state, school or society, allied himself to no class, showed favoritism to no system; but reversing all

methods known to men, he repudiated every agency of human triumph, welcomed the direct elements of defeat, and then left the world with nothing but His promise of earth-wide victory. He had no prototype, and He left no successors.

No one took up His work where He laid it down, as inventors do. No one walked in His footsteps until they paused, and then passed on. Discoverers do that. No one added to His teachings and restated His system, as philosophers have done. No one gathered up the frightened disciples and said, "Come, I will be your Master," as reformers do. Jesus Christ has never been duplicated. He has had no imitators. Whether the cross is too heavy, or the road too rough, the footprints of Calvary have never been marred or blotted out by the footprints of another.

He broke armies across His knee by simply saying, "Put up thy sword." By living the ordinary life of a citizen, He has unsceptered kings of their royalty. His is the gentleness of thistledown, driving before it the storm wind of race prejudice. He who never wore a garland of chivalry, inaugurated ages of chivalry. He who envied the

foxes their holes and birds their nests, re-established the home and family upon foundations that wars, migrations, and revolutions have never shaken. He whose holiness was godlike and knew no sin, yet planned the redemption of the world from sin and gave hope to millions of men and women, dying in their sins.

The universal fact of genius is to rise to its zenith during life. The grave may be a vindication, but it cannot be the apotheosis of victory. Genius succeeds. That is the proof it is genius. It makes the realms of life glitter with triumphs. But here again is a contradiction. The tomb of Christ is the cornerstone of his achievements. His death was the interpretation of His life. He waited until death to live. He had a handful of disciples while on earth, and countless millions since. Judged by the tests of men, His life was an absolute failure and His death the most irretrievable defeat. But time has proved that He reversed the tides of universal experience. When the hour came for Him to leave the world, His death was solitary as His life.

John Brown, whose scaffold shook America like an earthquake; Joan of Arc, whose

burning illuminated France and Europe; Savonarola, whose dying whisper broke in thunders over the dark ages; Socrates, drinking the poison flowing through the veins of corrupt Athens,—these are martyrs! But in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ the world has seen in Him, about Him, a mystery, so God-like in grandeur that we do not think of it except as the birth hour of a new humanity, a place where the heart gets such a vision of the eternities that we kneel and pray, each for himself, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

Measure great men by their disciples. Concede all that can be reasonably asked, and what disaster would compare with that disaster to the world if we should blot from the page of history a few of Christ's disciples?

Here is the map of the world.

Blot out Washington and the Puritans, and this republic is no longer free. Blot out the Christian Columbus, and half the world has disappeared from the map. Blot out John Knox, and Scotland has fallen. Blot out John Huss, and Bohemia is without hope. Blot out the Christian Guten-

berg, and the printing press is vanished. Blot out Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, and we are prostrate in the dark ages. Blot out Dante and Savonarola, and Italy kneels to the throne of Lorenzo. Blot out Zwingli, and Switzerland is a mountain solitude. Blot out Peter the Hermit, and the march of the Crusaders, and the last spark of civilization has died in modern Europe. Blot out the Christian Charles Martel, and the Mohammedan shadow crushes the world. Blot out Paul, the Apostle, and humanity kneels before that monster, Nero.

Blot Jesus Christ Himself from history, and twenty centuries of art, inventions, and discoveries, twenty centuries of liberty, progress, and civilization, twenty centuries the most wonderful in the world's history,—all have vanished.

Blot Jesus Christ from history, and America, Europe, Russia, the modern progress in China, India, Africa, the gigantic reformations, revolutions, and liberty-compelling upheavals of two hemispheres,—all are dead.

Blot out that manger cradle of Bethlehem, and the Roman Empire was without purpose, Athens had no mission, Egypt was

an accident, and Judaism, with thousands of years of prophecy, was the frightful mutterings of a race damned with insanity.

Blot out that manger,—then the poets, prophets, seers and martyrs of sixty centuries, the temples, altars, priests of every clime and every age, all these have lived without purpose and died without hope. Mark well the conclusion of Modern Skepticism! If Jesus Christ was earth-born and not of heaven, religion is a lie, every page of history is a fathomless riddle, civilization is a delusion, fate rules the world, and the earth itself is no longer a part of the moral universe of God!

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST CONTRASTED WITH GREAT MEN.

One type of greatness is the man who sums up within himself the spirit of the age. Although a mountain, he is composed of the same dust as the valley. He is a sun whose flame is kindled out of the hopes and aspirations of the human race. But this does not describe Christ. He is not the echo of the national spirit. Upon His brow is not written the thought of the age. On the other hand, He contradicted the political dreams of Israel. He was a bitter disappointment to Priest and Pharisee. There is nothing in Christ that even faintly resembles the vitriolic pride, intolerance, and the throne-bewitched eyes of Israel.

A man is great because he is the embodiment of one idea, Victor Cousin says, never more than one. Human nature cannot rise to such heights as to be able to humanize more than one sublime truth. Columbus, Calvin, Bruno, Napoleon, Washington,—to name such men is to name a list of immense ideas; but each man expresses but one.

Columbus is not identified with the idea that belongs to Luther. Calvin and Washington are not ministering spirits of the same regnant truth. One idea upon the altar of a man's heart is the law of human greatness. But the one supreme thought that Christ represents cannot be named. He was not swayed by a dazzling hope, as men are, nor was He the soldier of some masterful ideal.

Another type of human genius is the Reformer. Upon his thoughts and actions, a new epoch opens its gates. This man is mysterious. He is an hurricane at midnight. But in that terrifying hour is being wrought a new civilization. But this does not image forth Christ. He is not a John Baptist of progress. In His hand there is no battle-axe. He is as calm as the heart of the seas.

Great men employ the forces of law and the appeal of self-interest. One demonstration of the divinity of Christ lies in the fact that increasing ages increase His influence; yet he ignored every weapon used in world building.

Another type of mortal greatness is the Poet.

To the eye of commercial clay, a garret, a bed of straw, a fireless hearth,—these are kinsmen to the grave. But soft, a Poet dwells in that lofty place where poverty mocks with rags! From that broken window pane his eye peers forth. He sees the morning untenting the skies. The East is a sea whose waves bring mysterious whispers from the great beyond. Around him sweep in mighty surges the prophecies of the new day. Afar off the clouds begin unfolding their radiance, splendor overtopping splendor, range above range, altitude above altitude, height above height, and far above the loftiest shining peak the Poet beholds the horizons lifting The Morning, like the New Jerusalem, from God out of Heaven! So with Christ's words. The soul hath the poet's insight. Each sentence contains a crimson flash of glory. Each idea is deep as an Eastern horizon. Each truth unfolds the coming dawn, destined to pour a noonday of righteousness upon humanity.

The Poet is the priest of civilization. He looks upon the past and weeps. He feels the pulse throbs of millions of hearts, and dreams. In the far away future he sees the solutions of world problems. He

gathers up those solutions into a song, waves his white hand, "Hail and Farewell," and disappears.

What does the poet leave behind? A footprint and a watchword. That footprint marks the path of progress. That celestial watchword becomes the secret of civilization. Not what the scientist thinks, not the tools of inventive genius, not what senates plan, but what the poet dreams, is the hope of the future.

O Spirit of Poetry! Born of the twilight and morning, child of the rainbow and the star, we hail thee as earth's glorified angel! We behold thy purpling footprints in autumnal woods when day is done; transforming the rude worm into a creeping prophecy of wings; girding the mountain with a silver tiara of snow. And wherever flowers kneel in perfumed raiment before the altars of the hills; where brooks do sing sad requiems amid October days, and happy children laugh in dreams,—there is thy tent and dwelling-place. Thou dwellest far down, down deep in human hearts, where funeral trumpets of woe peal forth dread tidings, and bugle-like emotions thrill with ecstasy and peace. And up, high up, where

holy aspirations flash their wings, and all the mountain-tops of life are luminous with joy. And out, far out upon the sea of human action, where deep calls unto deep, where Orion's suns, like processional torch-bearers, flame in the footprints of national achievements! Yes, wherever the slave's chain is melted in the hot breath of battle, wherever the martyr's scaffold is arched into cathedral-like solemnity, wherever prophets press their fire-kissed lips against black thrones of tyranny, and melt them down, there art thou regnant, O Spirit of Poetry, dweller of earth and sea and sky!

But this does not describe Jesus of Nazareth. Not one wave of poet's music thrills his speech during His public ministry.

Great men come in groups. Witness the Apostolic Age, the era of the Reformation, and the Revolutionary War. They seem to recognize their limitations, and rush upon the battlefield of their times in battalions.

The utter loneliness of Christ is supernatural. He not only lives in an hour desolate of masterful genius, but He adds to His own solitude. He repudiates the fellowship of the schools. He abandons the tem-

ple. He does not even for a moment seek refuge under the shadow of great names. Nevertheless, this solitary voice reaches the universal mind and heart. His tears, like seas, gather up the world's rivers of anguish. He keeps His hold upon mankind, largely because "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Another human genius is a picture of the nation in action. What he says and does, the people are saying and doing on a smaller scale. He is a colossus, and the generation uses his footprints as a map of the times.

But Christ is nothing like this. To the contrary, he lived as if upon another planet. The proof of Christ's unlikeness to His age lies in this fact: No nation can wholly repudiate its son. A nation is like an individual; it cannot despise its own thinking. But Christ was rejected by the representative thinkers of His time. His acceptance by lepers, the maimed, the ignorant and the mob, is a pathetic demonstration of the gulf that separated Him from the religious forces of the period.

Great men are often the products of the age. Shakespeare was the creation of the age of Elizabeth. Columbus was a sail

swept across the Atlantic by the scientific investigations of his time. Germany was in the flower of the Reformation, whose fruit was Martin Luther. It was the slavery of the Jewish race that lifted the voice of Moses into an archangel's majesty.

Now look at the condition of the times at the birth of Christ. Athens was a sculptured ruin of theories. Not a tongue upon the Tiber, but was fettered with tyranny. Jerusalem was dying. Except Hillel and Samuel, there was hardly a distinguished Jewish intellect. Justice was dead. Liberty was a memory. Morality was a theory, and religion was clasping fingers with idolatry.

Somehow, men seemed to know that deliverance could not come through their own creations. Therefore the schools were abandoned. The temples were empty. The throne only deepened the immense darkness. As if swayed by a common impulse, the nations turned their faces skyward, and there arose the Sun of Righteousness, who is to-day the conscience of the world,—the all-pervading moral influence of modern times.

Great men break down somewhere and

unmask some hidden weakness. A man will seek some masterful human joy polluted with sin; or covet the insolence of power; or ambition will enthrall his life and make him cruel; or he will kneel, the slave to some habit, tradition, custom or superstition. He is often violent, or hateful, miserly, cowardly, fanatical, or bigoted.

But none of these things is found in Christ. Amid every conceivable relationship, he is never discovered flung to earth in mortal weakness. With aristocrats and the poverty-stricken, with timid disciples or the excited multitude, alone or upon the streets, when raising the dead, or in conflict with the Pharisees, in Gethsemane, or before Pilate, upon the cross, abandoned by His disciples,—not only does He not falter, but each calamity, like the twilight, adds the lustre of new virtues to the firmament of His personality.

Another characteristic of human genius is his lack of self-consciousness. He walks with eyes closed, yet straight to the goal. He never boasts of his plans. He promises nothing. He lives serenely innocent that he is exalted above his fellows. He cannot and does not form any estimate

of the value of his ideas, nor does he predict the range of his influence! Here is a distinct departure. Christ outlines His plans in advance. He paints a map of His future victories. He is the fulfillment of prophecy, and He knows it. He is the beginning of a new world history, and He knows it. He is the centre of the moral universe of man, and He knows it.

"Familiarity breeds contempt" is an impish law in social life. No man is great in the eyes of his intimate friends. But intimacy with Christ as a Rabbi, culminated in His worship by His disciples. That is true now. Intimacy with Christ makes a man feel sinful, repentant, and brings him into the mood of wanting His forgiveness and blessing. To look into His eyes is to feel the accusing gaze of Heaven searching your heart.

No great man was ever the incarnation of several distinct personalities.

Christ was a miracle of multipersonality. He was a carpenter, a physician, a fisherman, a philanthropist, a citizen, a subject, a servant, a patriot, a king, a prophet, a seer, a priest, a teacher, a lawgiver, a judge. Among conservatives, a radical, and by rad-

icals upbraided as conservative. Judged by Stoics to be Epicurean, and by Epicureans denounced as a Stoic. Hated by some as an Iconoclast, by others for his defence of old institutions. Eclectic in his thought, yet independent. A friend of aristocrats and of outcasts. In harmony with the noblest spirit of Judaism, and the best elements of Gentile thought, yet so vast his character that the human universe of great souls occupies no more room across the life of Christ than does the milky way of stars across the sky.

The great man labors for a people. Buddha tried to lift India. Confucius tried to lift China. Zoroaster tried to lift Persia. Plato tried to lift Athens. Cæsar tried to lift Rome. Luther tried to lift Germany. Knox tried to lift Scotland. Washington tried to lift America. John Brown tried to lift the Negro. Each one succeeded only partially, but Christ claimed, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Twenty centuries vindicate His claims.

With the appearance of a great man, the rule has been that people grow temporarily better; then worse than ever. Look at the corruption of Judaism, in spite of Moses

and the prophets. Or, at Athens and Rome, in spite of their sages. Or, at India and China, in spite of Buddha and Confucius. Christ alone has made humanity better. The world is purer now than it was then. It will be nobler to-morrow than it is to-day. No one questions that. Had His teachings been those of a mere man, their influence would not have survived the generation in which He lived.

Men do not die for great men. Men die for a cause, a principle, for a country, but tens of thousands have died for Christ. They said so. Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Rousseau, Bolingbroke, Ingersoll, — how many men have gone to martyrdom for their sakes?

Another fact of human genius is its persistency. Every type duplicates itself in human form in each successive generation. The world is never barren of great men. The discoverer, the poet, the prophet, the martyr, the statesman, the scholar, the reformer,—these men, it may be said, never die childless. They replenish succeeding generations. It needs but favoring conditions, and a majestic soul appears. Let a crisis arise, and frowning eyes are seen above the

horizon. When vice has twisted its coils around sacred things, suddenly the shout of the reformer is heard. Nothing foreheralds his approach. The times may seem unpropitious. Public opinon is not prepared for his advent. Nevertheless he comes, and after him comes another, and another, and still others, until the battle is won.

Here, again, history is contradicted. Christ has had no successors. Neither was He the duplicate of any pre-existing type. We find vague hints of a Messiah here and there in literature. We find foreshadowings of a mysterious advent in the Old Testament. Men have seen in David, in Jacob, in Elijah, and in Abraham dull flashes as of some far-off conflagration, but that is all. A visitor from another world could not tell, by watching the dawn, what the sun was like. One moment it would seem that a vast pearl was advancing. Then a gorgeous rose color gilds the firmament, and he would predict that a shining mountain of gold was rising in the East. If he were to prophesy the character of the sun, its size, and shape, and coloring, by the massive changes building in the morning sky, he would declare that not one, but mul-

titudes of suns were rising, each different in color and of dreadful majesty. Imagine his amazement when a world appeared, seemingly like a shield in girth and in diameter.

That was why the Jews were disappointed in Christ. In the Old Testament He was seen as a lamb, a lion, a prince, a king, a morning star, a sun of righteousness, the wonderful one, the chief among ten thousand. Then came a carpenter. Instead of being born in Jerusalem, He comes from a moth-eaten village. Instead of a sword, instead of a scepter, instead of victory, they saw a peasant, poverty, defeat, the cross, the dying eyes, the tomb. He was not a John Baptist rebuking a voluptuous court. He was not a Socrates introducing a new era of culture. He was not an Alexander, sowing civilization from a war chariot. He was not a Moses leading a nation out of bondage. He was not a Luther making war with a corrupt church. He was not a Latimer dying for the sake of an idea. He was not a Napoleon trying to uprear an empire upon cannon. He was not a Darwin trying to alphabet the facts of earth

into scientific systems. He was not a Browning transmuting the prose of life into poetry. He was not a Michael Angelo resurrecting the dead body of art. He was not a Columbus charting new seas, and adding new continents to the world's map.

Only one type of mortal greatness remains,—the Prophet! Was He a prophet like those of the Old Testament?

The prophet belongs in a rank an eagle's flight above the ranks of earth's immortals. He is in a distinct class. He resembles no one.

I once looked upon the Pacific Ocean when it seemed like a vast poem. Anon, it moved in priestly solemnity. Then it flung its billows against the cliffs like a reformer hurling anathemas against the evil of his times. In the morning it wore the serene face of a martyr upon the scaffold. At noon, it had the statesman's grandeur of personality. Again the mood shifted, and it seemed a gigantic Socrates brooding upon world problems. Compress that ocean into a man, and you have the prophet!

He salutes us from afar. He seems to dwell in eternity. The prophet's eyes have

the quality of mountain summits. When the world is dark his eyes are beautiful with light. His soul is rude. His voice is a scream. He mocks our institutions. He threatens us with, "Woe, woe!" The world has always martyred the prophet, thinking he was a wild beast in human form.

No marble monument for the prophet! His grave is weed-grown and forgotten. But men say, "His speech is hushed now!" Not so! He thrilled men's lives liks harps, and that music cannot die. His bugled voice with resurrection power aroused dead hopes. His tears were lightnings smiting tyrannies. His frown flung terror upon the hearts of Kings. He stood for God amid great crimes. Like fabled Atlas, he carried this sad world upon the strong shoulders of His love. Now lies he there! But the prophet's grave is the cradle that God uses, to rock humanity from the infancy of barbarism into the manhood of civilization.

But in this battle-voiced legion of angel-men, from Moses to John the Baptist, from John the Baptist until now,—wherein do

we find a place in their ranks where Christ may stand? Which one does He resemble? Look closely into those faces and find His image hinted forth that we may say, "Here is one like Him!"

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST'S INFLUENCE DURING "THE DARK AGES."

In the annals of earth, it has never occurred that misunderstanding the teaching of a great man has plunged the world into night, or that a profounder insight into his teachings inaugurated a new civilization. Christ is the solitary exception to this universal rule. The Dark Ages were the direct result of a misapprehension on the part of the Church of the mind of Christ. The modern world had its beginning in the hour when "the Truth as it is in Jesus" was visioned into the souls of a few of His disciples.

There is the page of history,—Mark!

The moment Christianity began to be interpreted as Churchianity the Dark Ages grappled Europe in a death struggle.

The organization of men to be the agency of Christianity developed into the institution called the Church, and the Church, to speedily accomplish its ends, put on governmental power. But all governmental power

rests on the lion's majesty, brute strength. Every throne in the world is arched upon polished blades of steel. Therefore, it was a blunder to unite the Church and the state, from the nature of the two things. The state is founded upon the law of justice and right conduct. The state depends upon the consent of the governed. The will of the people must ever be the foundation of empire. The Church rests upon the law of love. It insists not simply on right conduct, but upon holiness. It looks beyond the consent of the majority. God fixes the standard of rule and conduct.

The state rests upon expediency, policy, and what is practicable, while Christianity rests upon the law of God, regardless of expediency, policy or practicability. The state seeks material prosperity, and has only earthly ambitions. The Church stands for spiritual life, even at the cost of material prosperity, and, instead of looking upon the present hour, calmly and steadfastly gazes into the future for the consummation of its plans, not merely into the centuries, but into eternity.

The Church in its governmental relationships resorted to that universal strength of

government, and finally appealed to force. It fought new ideas with scaffolds. It tried to sway public sentiment with a prison. It brought great doctrines to trial as criminals are brought before jury boxes. The Church saw apparent danger in new scientific investigations. It thought it beheld the downfall of Christianity, in the presence of some broader interpretation of dogma. It believed absolutely that heresy was treason, that doubt was criminal, and that free thinking was the Judas Iscariot of philosophy. Then the Church, imitating the methods of monarchs and tyrants, adopted the rack, the dungeon and fire, as a prevention and cure; and the result was, midnight spread over the human intellect, and in that inferno of darkness, the human conscience became delirious, the moral virtues unfurled flags of treason, and the historian has set the seal of immortal infamy upon that frightful epoch and called it, "The Dark Ages."

Who is the poet of that hour? Dante!

Dante's poem is a hideous picture of the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages are the deep footprints in history, where humanity paused! Dante describes that pause under

a parable. He starts on a journey with Virgil. Dante is humanity, and Virgil is the past. This describes the Dark Ages. Humanity, leaning upon the past, tries to move forward. The journey ends in hell.

Hell, in this poem, is simply a terrific vision of the social, moral and political conditions of the times. In this world of shadow there are degrees of suffering. Some of the lost are pursued by devils; some are wrapped in the coils of monster serpents; there is the profound abyss, the lake of fire, and the frozen sea. In the midst of this arctic zone of ice, Dante tells us, he saw a monster gnawing the head of a man. That describes the Dark Ages. Vice was gnawing into the brain of civilization. A warning blazes up from this abyss of anguish. Dante is a prophet. He summons nations yet unborn into his presence and cries, "Lean upon the past, and progress ends; surrender to materialism and hell begins; abandon hope, all ye nations who enter here."

Dante also saw a human arm frozen in the ice. Below, in the black flood, the man's body was writhing. But the fingers that belonged to the frozen arm were reach-

ing upward, clasping and unclasping. This is Dante's prophecy of the Reformation. The human mind was frozen in the ice of the Dark Ages, but its fingers reached toward the sky, clasping and unclasping. Those fingers are soon to take a fresh hold upon the hand of God.

Dante's poem is not a mighty dirge, set to music by the imagination.

The facts are craped upon the centuries.

The Dark Ages are there, behold them!

At last the human mind is buried alive. What happens?

The seventh century fell prostrate. The eighth century was utterly undone. Scarcely a single illustrious son adorned its times. The ninth century gave birth to Charlemagne and Alfred the Great, and as if exhausted, fell back into the old lethargy. The tenth century beheld the coronation of Otto, Emperor of the West, a symptom of progress in Germany, and with these exceptions, resembles a mountain solitude. The eleventh century listens to the voice of Peter the Hermit and the march of the Crusaders. We gather around the tomb of the twelfth century and find but one illustrious product of intellect, the philosophy of Abel-

ard. In the thirteenth century we stand amid the ruins of the Catholic throne and church. The fourteenth century is marvelous as a birth room. Dante tells to the world his dream, Wycliffe translates the Bible, and the century ends with Chaucer, the patriarch of English literature. In the fifteenth century we find the Mohammedan armies flung back into the Orient. Nationalities are forming. Scotland, England, Germany, France are now distinct empires. John Huss attacks the Papacy, Joan of Arc gives to France its first breath of liberty, and nearly a thousand years have passed.

But during these centuries of darkness caused by the degeneracy of the Latin Church, several events occurred which made room for the Reformation. First, was the downfall of Constantinople, which scattered civilization every whither.

The soul of Constantinople was as beautiful as a desert spider, and as poisonous. It stood like a marble cross in the cemetery, a gold sculptured symbol of piety, marking the vestibule of death. The fault lay in the Church cathedraled within its walls. Upon that Apostolic face had grown a Judas

avariciousness, and it fronted the past. Shameless deeds blood-spotted the robes of Priest and Cardinal. The Monastery, though sumptuous with art, was haunted with crimes. Bribe-kissed money affixed the seal of the Vatican pardon. Monks, cowled like midnight, preached against progress and the rights of the people. The hierarchy grew like the cactus plant, leaf rooted to leaf, thorny-edged with kingly ambitions.

Suddenly, without warning, the air around the city's gates began to lightning-flash with swords. The Turks had come. They were triply strong in hate, in will, in iron mail. They pressed the bloody sacrament of war to the painted lips of the harlot metropolis. Each day chronicled new disasters. Their battering-rams almost shook the dead from their graves. Though they consented to the sneering courtesies of a truce, and listened to priestly oaths emblazoned with pomp, they yielded nothing. That blood-sucking Mohammedan vampire clung to that city until it fell, and Constantinople, queen of the five senses, was slain. But, Constantinople was the treasure house of the world. Now from its broken walls

flew the cherubim of civilization; the classics were disentombed; those open graves became universities; the arts of making paper and glass, the manufacture of cotton and leather, became divinities in commercial enterprises; the Damascus method of tempering steel was unchained from the dungeon secrecy; the introduction of rhyme into metre attuned poetry with orchestral majesty; navigation like a spear shattered the terrible shield of the ocean; finally the knotted hand of the serf became the skilled hand of the mechanic; — that skilled hand marbled Europe with temples of prayer and devotion.

Then came the invention of gunpowder. Gunpowder folded battle thunder in the arm of the slave, and placed him upon a war-equality with the prince. He will never again kiss the foot of a throne. Then came the discovery of the printing press. The printing press made the serf, the intellectual equal of his priest. The newspaper is the university and theological seminary of the common people.

Then another ray of light flashed out of this profound darkness. The Church unconsciously had gravitated all the inquiries

of the mind toward theology. If men pondered the problems stated by Plato and Seneca, if men recast the philosophical systems of Paganism, it was for the purpose of harmonizing them with Christian doctrine. Science began with a theological premise. Poetry thrilled its verse with theological dogmas. Architecture, sculpture, painting, and music were consecrated by the genius of the Church, to illustrate creeds. Every great department of thought had theology for its center, and theology for its circumference. In other words, the intellectual genius of Europe, under the prodigious influence of the Church, became gradually employed in the task of putting into the life of the individual, society and the state, the moral responsibility of living upon the high plane of Christ's life, as well as intellectually grasping His thought.

Equally momentous was the advent of Savonarola into Florence.

In youth he determined to be a monk. Therefore he folded his passions like a soldier's tent that he might take his place in the armies of God. That was well. The times demanded consecration of genius.

Civilization was bruising her wings

against iron-barbed despotisms. The people were carrying about priestly-hushed consciences. The luxuries of the age had untempered the steel-clad modesty of the women. The mournful dirges of the chapel-singing Monks, were offset by the revels of a palace, where fortunes were drained in goblets of wine. The throne was sceptered by Lorenzo surrounded by a purple cloud of satellites, clowns, poets, scholars and painted harlots.

Suddenly a half-starved monk entered the city. It was Savonarola!

Bewildered by the eloquence of this Dominican Monk, Lorenzo, patron of arts, invites this apparition to pulpit himself in Florence.

Instantly, this cannon-mouthed monk burst into thunder. "The Church shall be scourged and regenerated, and that quickly,"—this was the message, which like a curse fell upon Italy.

Lorenzo was panic-stricken, for as if to fulfill the dread prophecy, outside the city gates appeared a battle-fingered King, in the midst of a wilderness of swords.

The people gathered in Saint Mark's

Church in penitential tears. Lorenzo went with them and applauded the Prophet, but his snake-like conscience crawling through the weeds of his heart, hissed with rage. Then he bethought himself with the sweet voice of diplomacy and the oiled fingers of flattery to smooth down the thunder clouds piled upon the prophet's face; rank was offered the monk, with the red-robed cardinals of Rome.

"No," said Savonarola, "for me is ordained the red robe of martyrdom."

Seeing his end near he toiled like a sun builder. Government was unseated from the palace and shouldered in the voices of the people. With his naked feet he trod down thorns of social iniquities. Ruinous taxations were annulled. He laid legal restraint upon every Florentine Shylock. He regenerated the courts of justice. He introduced far-reaching philanthropies. He purged the municipality of corruption: and all this without the flourish of a sword, without a riot in the streets, without wasting a drop of blood. His great heart was the cradle of future republics. He then openly arrayed himself against the aristocracies enthroned in Italy: the aristocracy of the

king, Lorenzo; the aristocracy of the priest, that monk yonder in the Vatican; the aristocracy of the classes, the nobles of Florence. Well, what are these aristocracies going to do about it? Either this man must die, or they must. There is no other alternative. But it is easier for one to die, therefore let it be Savonarola. They throttle him with a chain, and burn his body to ashes.

Such, O Heaven, is the foolishness of earth's princes, that they think they can roll back God's chariot wheels, by kindling in the highway of the centuries, a human bonfire!

God reached down from the sky, took those charred ashes and flung them all over Europe. Wherever they fell, the earth shook. When the earth shakes, men pray. When men pray, they unyoke the tyrannies of the flesh and answer to the roll call of the skies for volunteers. From that hour, the Reformation soldiery grew from a feeble company into battalions.

Therefore, in Martin Luther and the Reformation, we see what? The Pope arrayed against an obscure monk, and the monk victorious? No! Luther was the hinge, human liberty was the ponderous gate, and

God swung it. In the Reformation the human mind walked through that gate and wrote its immortal emancipation proclamation against all human authority, living or dead. It asserted its right to think, regardless of creeds and systems. It asserted its sovereignty to judge of facts, regardless of opinions and theology. It asserted its prerogative to investigate man, to investigate the nature of the universe, to speculate upon the nature of God, unfettered by tradition. The Protestant Reformation was not simply a demand for reform, as the word "Reformation" implies; it was the plea of the human mind and conscience for freedom, and from that hour liberty became the new dynamic in politics. It rocked the cradle of science. It was the advocate of universal education. It replaced the authority of king-craft, priest-craft and class-craft, with that magnificent substitute, the right of private judgment.

A legend says, a Celtic wizard by the name of Merlin, made a palace for King Arthur grow out of the ground by playing upon the spot some exquisite music. We sometimes think it is the law-maker, the politician, the newspaper editor who are build-

ing the beauteous fabric called "modern civilization." But the real masons, carpenters and sculptors are the holy influences creeping out of prayer meetings, Sabbath schools and Churches, where God's spirit plays upon the chords of human nature. So it was in the Dark Ages.

The hour was marked by a forward movement of human endeavor. Masterpieces of sculpture were brought from the cities of the Mediterranean Sea. The classics, orations and poems by the stalwart Greek and Roman masters were scattered over Europe. Out of this quickened intellectual life came Platonic-browed men like Erasmus, a scholar who seemed to know the content of universal truth. Painting stretched new canvas under the brush of Raphael. The organ took the place of the harp. The discovery of the magnetic compass was a Bethlehem star for Columbus. But above all, a religious revival took place. Art was colored by religious sentiment. The discoverers executed the Church's dream of planting religion in distant places. Scholarship was engaged in reconciling the quarrel between philosophy and religion. Science had for its task the establishment of God as Creator

and Upholder of the universe. Universities grew from sparks into stars.

The Dark Ages present to us the human mind in subjection, the intellect of man opposed by tradition, the scepter and the dungeon. But what was the result? Was free inquiry stifled? Was the spirit of investigation unwinged? Did the Church with all its ponderous machinery of ecclesiastical authority, reinforced by the steel arm of the state, succeed in making the human brain a slave? Just the reverse was true. The genius of Christianity, born of the free spirit of Christ, reasserted its lofty dignity. It lifted reason again to its throne, replaced the seraph's trumpet to the lips of conscience, and the human mind stretched upon the rack, tied at the stake, imprisoned in the dungeon, asserted a strength that quenched the fire, shattered the chain, crumbled the scepter, and, bursting forth into new inquiries, new investigations in science, philosophy and theology, the modern world was born.

But gigantic as were the minds of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, equally astounding, is that group beyond them. They belong to the future.

Therefore, are their faces veiled in darkness. Therefore do they whisper softly, that no man can hear. But when the hour strikes, each will rush out of eternity, and, unwinged, garbed like a man, will stride the world with angel tread, to smite the evils of the times, or to replenish the soul of civilization with immortal youth. That is the standing miracle of history. A new occasion is born, and great souls are born in the same hour. That is why the wheels of progress are never ditched. If one charioteer falls, another is ready to grasp the lines. When more light is needed to blaze the path of reform, God wraps an angel in flesh and blood and hurls him from the sky to earth.

Never has civilization, like the mother of Christ, stood weeping over the martyrdom of her only-begotten, but a mysterious voice speaks,—"Behold thy Son," and lo, standing by her side is another epoch-making man, armed and ready to finish what the first began. Look at the world's map for proof. Suppose the Emperor had yielded to the temptation and given Luther to the flames, would the Reformation, too, have perished at the stake? Do you see that man crouched in the shadow of the Alps? That

is Zwingli! Look into France. That university student is John Calvin! Turn toward England. Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer are getting ready to become swords of fire! Now turn your gaze into Scotland! That babe in the cradle is John Knox!

That is the secret of God. Never has humanity lost His friendship. When the new age comes, He ordains men to keep it alive. Does the age demand a kingly spirit? There is Charlemagne! Is a priestly warrior required to upheave the times? Then comes Peter the Hermit! Is it scholarship? Then Melancthon is ready to reinforce Luther! Are the people hungry for a poet's music? Tasso begins to sing. If a reformation is kindled and bodies are needed to be burned to make the conflagration fill the earth with glory, God has anointed ones ready to serve as wood. Huss, Savonarola, Joan of Arc, Tyndale, Cranmer, of whom the world was not worthy, stand waiting with smiling lips, each in turn to become a living torch that humanity may see the path which will lead out of the night of the Dark Ages.

Now look backward!

The sixteenth century unfolded three colossal men. Columbus, the Christian, a

new world at his feet, vindicating the majesty of a private opinion in science. There stands that splendid-souled monk, Savonarola, vindicating the majesty of a private opinion in politics. And there, a step in advance, rises the priestly form of Luther, vindicating the majesty of a private opinion in religion. These three made the seventeenth century possible. It opens with Shakespeare, thrilling the harp of English speech with the music of the spheres. Galileo strides before us, his brow ablaze with newly-discovered constellations. Lord Bacon becomes the harbinger of modern science. Cardinal Richelieu is now political master of France, Cromwell of England, and Peter the Great of Russia. Milton plans his immortal epic, Rubens is crowned king of art, Dryden, poet-laureate, John Locke, the prophet of a new philosophy, and the century ends its life with Sir Isaac Newton in the mid-noon of his career. Then the eighteenth century, with John Wesley for its divine evangel, brings the spirit of Christianity to America.

And what more? When the Reformation swept the shadow of the Spanish flag from Europe, Germany kindled every forest tree

into a torch of civilization. Austria fell from the saddle of kingship, and became a servant. Prussia built into her schools the brain of Athens. France offered herself a battle-ground for political experiments. England signed the Magna Carta which made her eagle kings moult their feathers into a parliament of peers. Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, from their pulpits of snow, preached the springtime of equal rights, while Poland vindicated her loyalty to the political renaissance by national martyrdom.

What nations refused the light? Russia, Spain, Portugal, Italy! And what has been their destiny? Russia is now like an uncalendared day in which snow and sunshine struggle for the mastery. Spain's voice has shrunken to a serpent's hiss; it doubtless hath music in it, but who can bear it? Italy has as many eyes as are pictured in a peacock's plumage, but they see nothing. And look at Portugal, her hands bandaged with idleness, her cheek pinched with famine. You might as well try to kindle sparks from a quagmire as to blaze ideals from the brain of Portugal. Only now, after four hundred

years does it show signs of being worthy to tent itself in this century.

These four kingdoms haughtily refused the gifts of the sixteenth century, and to-day they painfully limp, a thousand years behind the bugles and drums of progress. Meanwhile the victories of the liberated mind increased in political achievements. Through John Locke, England put the making of laws and their execution into different hands, which ultimately led to the revolutionary conclusion, that taxation without representation was tyranny. From Calvin came the superb dogma, enshrining the voice of the people with sceptered dignities. Montesquieu, in France, gathered from the teachings of history the splendid tidings, that a throne must echo the demands of the masses. Rousseau followed with a social contract, the declaration that society is a social unit, a moral personality, the only divine sovereignty. From the gates of these doctrines burst the French Revolution, shrinking her kings into bats, and giving to the word "Citizen," imperial potency.

In the light of these facts, shall we say the Reformation was an accident? Were

Tasso, Shakespeare, Galileo accidents? Did accident produce Rubens, Cervantes and the printing press? Did accident unfold Luther, Copernicus, Calvin and Wesley? Was the age of Elizabeth an accident? The destruction of the Spanish Armada, was that an accident? Did accident call back the sciences to life, replenish literature out of the fall of Constantinople, arouse the spirit of art to loftier achievement, usher in the reformations and revolutions of Germany, France and England? Did accident terminate the dark ages? Did accident discover America?

In the New Testament are three sentences:

First, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." That proved the king was not divine.

Second, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." That proved the priest was not divine.

Third, "God can of these stones raise up children unto Abraham." That proved the classes, an aristocracy of blood, were not divine.

Plato and Seneca both declared, that if a

man worked with his hands, he was a slave. Christ, as a carpenter, proved that labor was divine with dignity.

Europe during the Reformation, waged war against the divine rights of kings and priests.

In the war of the American Revolution, and the Civil War, were vindicated the divine rights of the individual.

The American mechanic, with a ballot in his hands, is the political apotheosis of all the centuries, since Christ, the carpenter, walked the earth.

Skepticism is challenged to duplicate this vision in the annals of the world.

Call now the roll of the world's great empires, and let each bring forward as tribute to the twentieth century, its richest achievement. China would come, the pallor of death upon her cheek, and bring forward the wisdom of Confucius. Africa would unroll the splendor of Egypt. Greece offers poets, patriots and statesmen, who never can be forgotten. Italy points to Cicero and Raphael, a multitude of illustrious sons. France claims Napoleon, the greatest of soldier statesmen. Germany boasts reformations and philosophies, making eulogy a

mockery. England brings Westminster Abbey, rich with the ashes of princes and men of genius.

Then comes America. America has never produced the equal of a Plato, nor of a Confucius, nor will her achievements in scholarship, art and science, equal the achievements of the old world. Why then does America claim front rank with those illustrious empires? Simply because of an humble political incident which occurred a few years ago. The President of the United States went to the polls of his native city, and cast there his ballot. An humble mechanic, with a dinner bucket in one hand, and a ballot in the other, came immediately behind the President, and cast his ballot. But this mechanic happened to belong to the opposite political party; therefore, according to the genius of our institutions, institutions born in that Bethlehem manger, cradled upon battlefields, baptized with the sacrificial blood of countless martyrs, these institutions folded in the ballot of the mechanic, gave him such royal rights as a citizen, that his vote annulled the ballot of the President of the United States.

That was all!

The old world empires may rise now and sneer at this insignificant trifle. They may point to the weakness of our standing armies, our feeble attempts at architecture, the poverty of our literature, and even claim that our political institutions are only an experiment. But here and now, we behold in this simple incident, the decay of thrones and tyrannies of nearly two hundred generations. It realizes the hopes and dreams of the world's scepter-crushed millions. At last the humblest mechanic that walks our streets, protected by the Stars and Stripes, equals in ballot-power, the President of the greatest republic—upon this planet.

A misapprehension of Christ's teachings caused the dark ages. A profounder spiritual vision of Christ created the Reformation, and the modern world. Skepticism is challenged to name one or a group of skeptics, who so divinely ever influenced humanity.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SKEPTIC'S DILEMMA; ANALYSIS OF THE GOSPELS.

If asked to name the proofs of a divine nature, what would we demand?

First: That His coming shall be prophesied! Behold the heralding voices of seers and prophetic events.

Second: That His advent shall be a marvel in method and circumstance. There is the Virgin mother, the mysterious star, and an organ loft in the sky filled with angels.

Third: That His wisdom, although human so that we may understand, shall transcend the speculations of the schools. Hear the confession of universal scholarship, "Never man spake as this Man."

Fourth: We shall demand that His origin, if heavenly, shall be glorified with corresponding works. The miracles harmonize with His character and claims. Not one is discordant.

Fifth: We shall expect Divinity to live a life of incarnate holiness. The challenge of Christ remains unimpeached; He says, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?"

Sixth: We shall insist that if a divine personality appears, the universal triumphs of death shall cease at His command.

The burden of proof lies upon the Unitarian and skeptic. Christ's resurrection is not to be simply denied, not argued against, not impeached by impudent scientists and mocked at in some half-fledged school rooms, called universities. *It must be disproved.*

The supernatural element in the Gospels is attested in that, each Gospel writer describes a Christ individual to that Gospel. There seem to be four personalities, under one veil of human nature.

Take for example Matthew's Gospel. It is distinctively a description of a Jewish Messiah. He closes a thousand years of prophecy with this recessional,—"It is fulfilled." In the background are the prophets. In the foreground is Christ. Israel is wrapped in slumber. Matthew sees the night of the Jewish past beautifully softening down in color, a conscious yielding before a presence felt, but scarcely seen. The horizons of Messianic hopes gradually upbuild themselves out of the night. The stars of ceremonials cast their shining crowns before a regal presence, then silently vanish one by

one, but no eye can detect their going. The Mosaic altar, like the East, gorgeous in stormy robes, foreheralds the mystery of the cross. In the temple the cloud of incense, long and slender as a trumpet, is lifted; but whatever the music, it is not for earth's listening. Matthew saw in the past holy days, like priests, a golden multitude processioning the highways of the times, while prophetic voices from the great beyond gave warning of a miraculous advent.

Matthew beheld in Christ a new dispensation. The Jew knelt at Sinai. Humanity shall kneel at Golgotha. The Decalogue is a mountain of fire. The Beatitudes are hills of healing. The priests and Pharisees stand at the ancient altar, an altar still bloody with sacrifice. Matthew cries—"Behold the true lamb of God." To Matthew, Christ was the interpretation of every ceremonial, the love spirit written in the law, the temple incarnate, and, because of the blood of Abraham, the rightful heir to David's throne.

Take the miracle of the healing of the leper. Here Matthew inshrines the spirit of Christianity. The Jewish attitude toward the leper was,—"Let him stand outside the

city's gates, shrouded like the dead and cry, —'Unclean, unclean!'" Moreover, Judaism gazed upon the Gentile world as a leper. Judaism offered this leper, law, ceremonial, ritual, but not divine pardon. It must die. Christ *touched* the leper. That is the genius of Christianity. It is not philosophy, not sermons, not colleges, but the personal touch that will save humanity. In all the philosophies and religions of the world there was no room for the leper. But the leper can be cured. This is the affirmation of Christianity that contradicted the religions of the world. A divine touch means a divine life. If in marble glorious forms are possible, so in human nature, however vile, the angel life is potentially there. Poverty, disease, vice, degradation, these are rags. It is this view of humanity that is electrifying reforms today. Savagery is moral leprosy. Therefore, foreign missions have become the winged horse of American Christianity.

The Gospel of Mark is addressed to the Roman mind. Matthew faced the past. He stood upon the banks and watched the surge of the rivers of prophecy. The Jewish temple seemed covered with wings and flying hitherward. Ceremonials had risen from

their lethargy and stood like statues awakening. The past of Israel was like a dream. Matthew beheld in Christ its interpretation.

Mark's Gospel speaks of Christ in the present tense. The Roman empire had no backward look. Jupiter, the Roman divinity, was a capricious half man and god. Mark points to Christ and says—"Behold the Son of God." Nero wrestled in the amphitheatre, because the garland won there outshone the dull majesty of a Cæsar. In Mark's Gospel, Christ's actions are gladiatorial. Rome was not a nation filled with theorists. Her armies were always on the march. Mark makes the days of Christ's life swift-moving as battle chariots. The Romans were a victorious people. Mark portrays Christ as, "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah." Each year the boundaries of the empire were being enlarged by the bringing of new tribes into subjection. Mark turns to Rome, its eyes eager with the vision for world empire, and cries,—"Behold the new Kingdom!" Cæsar's word was final. Mark clothes the words of Christ with kingly majesty.

Rome believed that man was made for the

state. It is Mark who echoes Christ's great utterance,—"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." This means that man is the Sabbath of God. The Genesis record says, He rested after making man. Trade, culture, religion, government, these things are scaffolds and therefore holy, because they were made to rebuild man. They were made for him, he was not made for them.

Humanity was like a sea storm-swept. Upon the shore stood philosophers, dreamers, poets, statesmen, warriors, but all were powerless. Mark heard Christ, through the boisterous waves of a storm, say to humanity, the state, the individual,—"Peace, be still." To the Roman mind, loving imperialism, Mark portrays Christ as the one described by Isaiah,—"The government shall be upon his shoulder."

Luke's Gospel is addressed to the cultured mind. To the Greeks this Gospel would have resistless meaning. There is something about the Greek spirit that is universal. Its sculpture, its poetry, its philosophy, belong to the centuries. Hence, Luke paints Christ as the universal man. Matthew relates Christ to Abraham, but Luke

goes back to Adam, the first man. Humanity has fallen. Luke portrays Christ as the new Adam, come "to seek and save that which was lost." Christ, the universal man, is therefore the universal Saviour. Luke's Gospel is the inspiration of foreign missionary movements.

The Greek also glorified woman in art. But it was the weakness of Greek civilization not to understand woman, nor the solution of her problems. Luke describes Christ's attitude toward woman, which stands in perfect harmony with the story of Eden,—"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," floats from Adam's lips. Christ said of marriage—"They twain shall be one flesh." Marvelous words! It seems as if the Master stood again in Eden and caught the benediction breathed from the heart of Adam, as he gazed upon the woman.

The Garden of Eden!

There Adam lies. Creation's mysterious touch hath lulled each sense with sleep.

There lies humanity incarnate, a spirit veiled in mortal flesh, one whose imperial graces do culminate in that, that he is man.

Youth is visioned in that form, and yet

the dignity of years seems sculptured there, the calm and strength of age.

A crimson halo tints each cheek.

'Tis from within, where life the sun is orbited, and wide through the firmament of flesh it glows, splendoring far, until the senses and nerves, like hills, are purpled with the dawn.

Each breath that swells the veins with richer blood, the well-poised lip, the delicate tapestries of the eyes low swung, the brow, whose ivory throne awaits the rulership of kingly thoughts, all these proclaim a sovereignty that can bow the knee to none save God and her ordained to be his queen.

And there she stands, a marble statue breathing. How like and yet unlike yon mortal couched in dreams.

How reads the record of her birth?

Not from dust she rose. But when clay was rounded, pulsed with life, when immortality had set its seal thereon, thence was she enshrined, a new creation.

Her countenance, the rose and lily in beauteous rivalry hath claimed. Upon the scarlet-threaded lip, a smile hath victoried and illumes the horizon of her face; and

when she speaks, it doth appear that some celestial minstrel did lose his harp and left its music in her voice.

Behind the burning altars of her eyes priestly virtues kneel, ordained for earth-wide ministry.

Her heart love-sceptered is, which glorifies in rich enchantment, gesture, eye and speech, while the maiden brow, the blush of Eastern skies doth duplicate, the morning's crimson, rose and gold, fair nature's bridal wreath and diadem, for earth's divinity, woman, wife and queen.

That marriage is a thrice holy thing. Within the woods' cathedral, arched with memories sweet and dim, no censers swing, rich with perfumed incense; no acolytes and white-robed priests within the chancel kneel; no organ melodies mingle soft with choir music to voice in solemn hymn the costly and triumphant sacrifice of life consenting to life.

The bridal pair is in God's fingers, the holy instrument of creation's mystery. The home is Paradise, a realm of innocence where love's seraphs sing, and in whose vestibule, thrilled with unseen wings, the Eternal one doth linger still, breathing

Christ's benediction—"They twain shall be one flesh."

Shakespeare haunted the cities of Asia for a divine type of womanhood and found none. He found only Cleopatra, that beautiful asp, coiled upon the throne of the Ptolemies.

The Orient contained nothing but men. Why? Because the sculptured personality of woman was shattered by the iron hand of caste into fragments. Her soul was like the sky at dusk, starless of great hopes. Her honor was blackened by enforced marriage. She grew up a weed in the shadow of man. She was not the Priestess of the home, only its despised instrument. She was not the white brow of society, but its leathern-sandaled foot. She was not the noonday of the state, but its night. In religion, the priest did give her rank with toads and creeping things birthed in jungles. O American women, forget not this: You were in Asia despised, rejected, a creature of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Then Christ came. He loosed the chains of Oriental custom. He lifted the veil from your face and said, "Be not ashamed." He opened the gates of culture wide, and let you trail your robes through schools and college halls. He gave

you wings beneath whose shining the home rebuilt itself. He gave you social rights and queenly dignities, and forged the State into a brazen shield for your defense. Asia was your prison house, the hand of Christ did set you free.

It is Luke's description of Christ's courtly and delicate graciousness toward women that made the word " woman " flower forth into that word, "Womanhood."

Ask the modern scientist, what about humanity? He looks upon the huge tree, the strong beast, and says it is a matter of the survival of the fittest. He says that the decayed tree, the sick brute, the half-crushed creature, must go under. So it is in the physical world, so it is in the life of man. The Greeks said the same thing. They said only the strong and the civilized can survive; therefore, the poets, sages, scientists and statesmen labored to enrich the best elements of society in the struggle for existence. What of the criminals, the paupers, the corrupt and degenerate hordes in the whirlpools of the cities? The Sages said they must go under. Think what a funeral knell this was to the drunkard, the criminal,

the harlot and the lost. It was taught them it was only a matter of time when they must be ground into bloody clods under the leaden wheels of civilization.

Luke echoes Christ's overwhelming rebuke. He said that He had come to be a Saviour of the helpless, the lost and the abandoned. He said that it was possible for the corrupt to put on incorruption, for the degraded to be made pure. He said—"*I am come to seek and to save that which was lost.*" No moralist in the world ever declared such a thing. Christ stands alone to-day, among the worldlings, the moralists, the political economists, and the statesmen. He alone says there is rescue possible for Africa. There is a to-morrow for Asia. There is hope for every man, woman and child, no difference how sinful. Jesus Christ is walking across these centuries alone, lifting races, continents and generations into righteousness.

The Greeks developed the fine arts. Luke's Gospel immortalizes them. It has been, for the ages since, the food and drink of Christian architecture, painting, and sculpture. Behind the church music of twenty centur-

ies stands Luke's narrative of Mary's song of triumph. That song is also the Madonna Mother of Christian poetry.

Matthew described Christ as the Messiah. Mark said He was the Son of God. Luke said He was the Son of Man. John is the primitive Beethoven. He portrays not Christ in history, but Christ the soul of history. John's Gospel and apocalyptic visions are an hundred symphonies rolled into a prolonged peal of thunder. He compresses the moral history of the ages into an hour. He concentrates the prophecies of the world into the utterance: "The Word was made flesh." What man can climb the altitudes of that affirmation? Oceans lift their tides within its shores. It is a midnight sky blending with a firmament glorified with noon.

Within the prologue of John's Gospel, centuries of poets, prophets and priests stand with folded arms. In that prologue, the Orient, the Occident, and Judaism clasp hands. It is a mountain of transfiguration, and in the glory stand Buddha, Moses, Plato, and One whose garments shine as light. It is John who tells us this. Leaving the dull plains of earth, he ranged up and down the

cathedral aisles of eternity. He fell prostrate amid adoring cherubim. He beheld the flash of wings, the spectral forms of spirits clothed in immortal beauty. He talked with angels, gazed on mysteries too vast for mortal speech, measured the heights and depths of love, listened to voices, raptures and harmonies, that almost unseated his soul from its earthly tabernacle; then, as he descends to earth, the secret of God falls from his lips, —"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

"The Word," God's thought, His will, His purpose, swathed in mortality. This is John's message, the theme and key to his Gospel. John deals with the Christ life from the viewpoint of the seer, the poet, the scholar, the mystic, and the theologian. His records of Christ's words are not the parables upon the street to the common people, but the private teachings to His disciples. Therefore, they are more spiritual and more profound. Christ reveals to them the deep things of God. Other writers tell us of Christ's earthly career. John was the beloved disciple. His head once lay upon the Master's bosom. In John's Gospel we hear the beatings of the Infinite Heart. The other

writers tell what Christ said and what He did. John describes the soul life of Christ. The great scholars, the great philosophers of Asia and of the world, find in John's Gospel that which satisfies the loftiest intellectual needs of man, while the mystics, the saints, the devout ones of earth, have found in that Gospel that which satisfies the spiritual hunger of the human soul.

The Mosaic record states—"In the beginning God created." Moses starts from the creation of the universe and strides forward to the creation of man. John, like an archangel in the midst of the eternities, proclaims the most mysterious sentence that ever illuminated the ages—"In the beginning was the Word." Moses and the prophets saw God related by a covenant to the Jewish race, through Abraham. It is in John's Gospel we find that all-encircling arch—"God so loved the world." Tribes, races, centuries are all included in the circumference of the divine affection. John says—"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." This affirms that the religions of the world have their truths centered in Christ.

"The light shineth in darkness and the

darkness apprehendeth it not." Here in vast outline is mapped the heathen world. Under the sway of evil, the world was in a moral eclipse. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." In eleven words is the tragical history of Israel. "But to all who received Him, to them He gave the power of becoming the sons of God." The last twenty centuries bear witness of the fulfillment of that prophecy. He whom the Jewish Priests crucified is now the light and life of the Gentile nations.

Matthew's description outlined the Jewish Messiah. Mark's description of Christ, as the Son of God, is a vision of triumphant power which would appeal to the Roman genius. Luke with his poetry, his fine artistic sense, his aesthetic values, naturally would allure the art-loving Greek. John, who describes for us the soul life of Christ, satisfies the most spiritual needs of the humblest peasant and bewilders the proudest skeptic; John, whose Gospel is the foundation of theology and of modern philosophy; —a Gospel which portrays Christ so close to humanity that the slave's hand, clanking a chain, can touch Him; in the next breath he describes a glorified Christ, the heart of

God Himself, unfolding an analysis reaching so deep into the eternities that our man-made universities, piled one upon the other, like the stones of the Tower of Babel, are so pitiful in their failure to touch the Christ of the skies, that their builders seem possessed of only one gift,—the confusion of tongues.

CHAPTER VIII.

PART I.

THE SKEPTIC'S DILEMMA; THE MYSTERIOUS PERSONALITY OF CHRIST.

Let us now gaze upon Christ Himself. At once we are baffled. He is inscrutable. All we learn of His personality, we must gather from His speech. No key unlocks Himself but Himself. Those who wrote the Gospels offered no personal theories concerning Him. Who He was, what He was, is answered by some utterance from His lips.

But, inclusive as He is, Jesus Christ excludes all types of men. He differs from men, not simply in degree. It is not forgotten that He said of Himself,—"I am the Son of Man." But who will presume to explain what He meant when He said that? To affirm that He meant to acknowledge that He had the limitations of man is not in harmony with the facts. A man is the incarnation of one virtue, or fragments of many; but Jesus Christ is the incarnation of all the virtues known to humanity, plus! The virtues in a man's life are of unequal

rank; like April days, some are more gentle than others. But the virtues in Christ's life are like the gates of heaven, of equal splendor. It is impossible to lay a finger upon several transcendent virtues, or even one, that dominates the others. There are times and circumstances in a man's life when certain virtues are in an eclipse. But when we see Christ talking to the woman at the well of Jacob, or in the transfiguration scene, or upon Golgotha, there is no ranking difference in the virtues that adorn His personality.

The virtues are revealed upon every occasion, sublime or insignificant. No event is too commonplace for their united majesty. In His death hour, every virtue known to man, and virtues until then unknown, suddenly flame up from the cross in the midst of the darkness and earthquake.

Let us probe deeper. In His personality there are no habits. Neither have any habits been pruned away. It was said, " He grew in grace and wisdom."Apply that to a man; it means he outgrew some old habits. Use your microscope; you will find no ruins of bad habits in Christ's character. His moral earnestness is always at white heat,

whether in defeat or triumph. Circumstances leave no fingerprint upon His conduct. The most splendid opportunity does not quicken a pulse beat. The most dreadful misfortune does not loosen a fibre. The glorious confession of Peter, the treason kiss of Judas, leave Him undisturbed. His inspiration dwells within Himself, and like the ocean, it never swells and never shrinks. Amid excited thousands, He alone is calm. He is never timid, diffident, excited, nervous, frightened or hesitant. He is always at His best. He never falls back upon the lessons of experience. Yet He is never betrayed into an error of judgment. He is never guilty of an hallucination. He never exaggerates. He never poses. He is never dramatic. He never acts to His own advantage. He is not diplomatic. He exposes every motive with every act. He exhibits no shrewdness. Popularity never hurries a footstep, antagonism never falters a purpose. When others are sad, He has some secret source of joy. Then, when there is apparently no occasion, He is suddenly swept into tears.

We know something about Happiness. He is never "happy," as we understand that word. Only after years of discipline, cul-

ture, and Christian experience, may we attain for a few moments that religious ecstasy known as "joy." He lived in that realm every day, and without apparent effort.

He discovered nothing. He advocated the claims of no party, sect or creed. He said nothing about the social and political evils of His times. He was not a reformer, He was not an iconoclast, a revolutionist, an agitator, or a liberator. When asked to do something to relieve the tyrannies of the hour, He uttered this enigmatical sentence: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." What He meant, even the disciples did not know. Swords, philosophies, kings, creeds, rituals, the plans of statesmen, He looked upon as marble dust.

While insisting upon His kingship, He does it without pride. In His transfiguration hour there is no trace of vanity. He continually speaks of "My hour," as though it were the culmination of past centuries; but there is no egotism. He rebukes Peter for drawing a sword. Did He rebuke the sword? He did not ask Cæsar's soldiers to lay theirs down. He is confidential to a beggar and strangely silent before Pilate.

He is so lovable that He allures children to His knee, but when speaking to His own mother, He always addresses her with that icy term, "Woman!"

When He speaks He reserves nothing. Whatever He thinks He says, regardless of consequences. Fragments are always imperfect. The Gospel narratives are fragments, but the Christ-life therein revealed is perfect. We cannot imagine a word or action that could have been added that would have been to His advantage. He preached many sermons, He did many things of which there is no record. There are whole months lacking in His biography, yet the circle is complete. He so folds Himself into the smallest act, or incidental sentence, that we need scarcely any others for His portrait. Chisels, the painter's brush, music, architecture, and millions of eulogies have immortalized His every word and deed; yet there is a feeling in this century that Jesus Christ is just beginning to be known.

He displays no partiality. He scourges the Pharisees and His disciples in the same breath. He is just to every man, He flatters none. Arrogance never moulds His voice. Ambition does not enlarge His plans. His

philanthropy is tendered with the humility and grace of one who receives rather than one who gives. He gives men His advice; He always instructs them what to do. He never solicits the advice of His disciples. When they tender it He does not accept it. While He counsels no one, He never plans wrong. He was never discouraged. He was never despondent.

He used no human ideals in His personal development. He never carelessly wastes an hour; nor does an opportunity, a circumstance, or a friendship leave Him richer or poorer. With increasing years of wisdom and of experience, men modify their thinking. What Jesus said stands without revision or improvement. He modified nothing, and we cannot. To try to mould or restate one of His principles to suit our times, would be like trying to modify the law of gravitation.

Part II.

THE SKEPTIC'S DILEMMA; THE MYSTERIOUS CONTRADICTIONS IN HIS LIFE.

He was like nature, a blending of mysterious contradictions. An egg unfolds a worm; miraculously the worm puts on wings; when you stop to admire the beautiful wings, they vanish into death. Every thread in nature breaks suddenly and unexpectedly. So with Jesus of Nazareth. He was a net-work of opposites. Every action, like a highway in the Alps, leads suddenly to a precipice. He undergoes an intellectual eclipse and leaves His disciples standing in the dark as to what He meant. He contradicts Himself without explanation or apology. He is a labyrinth. At the end of each path is a Sphinx. Take the torch of your knowledge and experience and try to flash it down into His life; a mysterious wind blows it out. He says things and does things that paralyze our knowledge, experiences, and intuitions.

He was domestic in His tastes, but never had a home. His disciples one time said, "To-night we will abide with Thee." Then came the most pathetic sentence that ever

fell from lips: "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." He defended His disciples with supernatural power—He gave Himself to the soldiers. He spent His brief lifetime preaching against evil, then deliberately took a dying thief with Him into Paradise.

He was a critic, He was not a cynic. He was brave, but not an hero. He was capable of anger, but never rash. He was firm, but not obstinate. He was pious, but not impractical. He was humble, but not cowardly. He was gentle, but not effeminate. He was superior to the world, yet craved its sympathy. He was dignified, but simple. He was economical, but not miserly. He was cheerful, but never humorous. He was inquiring, but never curious. He was temperate, but not austere. His fortitude never became fatalism. His weakness never degenerated into apathy. His generosity never became indulgence. He was youthful in years, but venerable as the centuries in influence. He was keen, but not impatient. His enthusiasm contained no fanaticism. He respected authority, yet de-

manded that the world, from Cæsar down, and the generations of the future, should yield to Him as the final authority. He never apologized. He never said anything or did anything that needed an apology. He walked the earth like a king, but preserved the attitude of a servant. No European king could live as He lived and maintain his dignity.

He said of Himself—"I am the Son of man;" but we never associate Jesus of Nazareth with the idea of masculinity. A critical analysis of His character reveals a bewildering array of exquisite feminine attributes. He was delicate as woman; modest as woman; sensitive as woman; self-poised as woman; esthetic as woman; loving as woman; forgiving as woman. We never love great men, we admire them. We do not admire Christ, we love Him.

Who is the ideal Judge? The just Judge! Brutus forever remains the type. When Brutus' sons had committed treason and were brought before him, he says—"I have no sons now, I tear them from my heart, let them be beheaded." Would we regard as an ideal judge, one who forgave criminals? Yet,

here is One who went about forgiving men and women, and claimed that in the eternities He should be the judge of mankind.

When He says, "I am meek and lowly in heart," that is a distinct claim of humility. But to claim humility is to violate the law of humility. He violates it again when He says, "A greater than Solomon is here." He is speaking of Himself. He serenely affirms that He is greater than the wisest of His race. Imagine a young lawyer standing before the Supreme Court of the United States and saying, "I am greater than Blackstone." When the people say to Him —"Moses saith"—He replies instantly, "But I say unto you." In other words He says, "Moses and the prophets have had their day of authority; what I say now is final." Reconcile this with humility.

He says, "I am the Son of man." He does not mean that He is simply a man. He is humanity idealized. Now for women to use a man for an ideal, would be a violation of natural law. They would become masculinized. But countless millions of women use Jesus Christ as an ideal for the noblest graces of womanliness. No woman ever became masculinized because she became a dis-

ciple of Jesus of Nazareth. While in His personality we discover a wide range of those delicate attributes that jewel womanhood, yet He is the ideal for manhood. Millions of men to-day use Him as an ideal for the perfect life of man. No skeptic has ever affirmed that a man was made effeminate by becoming a Christian. He is also the ideal for children. Here is a threefold ideal: The perfect man, the perfect woman, the perfect child, in one Personality.

Occasionally He seems strangely weak. At the tomb of Lazarus He weeps like a woman. But here is a contradiction—He says one day—"Come unto me and be saved, all ye ends of the world." He is speaking out of His consciousness of strength. The miracle is, that He projected into the consciousness of the people of His time, the faith that He could save them. The second miracle is, He projects far into future centuries, into the consciousness of people representing all races and conditions, the fact that He can save them. The millions of Christians to-day live sustained by His simple unattested word—that He can save. Any one here could say as He did—"Come unto me and be saved," but if one of us

should affirm that, it would be declared to be the mark of insanity.

He one time fed five thousand people—behold the philanthropist! Then He said to His disciples, "Go and gather up the fragments"—behold the economist! We know from experience that the philanthropist who will feed five thousand people never concerns himself about the crumbs that are left. We also know that the man who gathers up crumbs never banquets five thousand people.

In resources He is limitless, inexhaustible. He always knew what to do on a given occasion. He is never in doubt, puzzled, or in a quandary. He tells Pilate that He could summon legions of angels for His defense if He wishes. Then He submits to the crown of thorns, the scourge, and the cross. In other words, He consented to be crucified. For a man to do that would seem like suicide.

In His day the scholar was a power. He never employed scholarship. In His day the sword was a power. He said, "Put up thy sword." In His day money was a power. He never used a copper to further His ends.

His attitude toward people was unique as Himself. He laid responsibilities upon His

disciples as though they were archangels. We covet the friendship of respectable people, intellectual men and women, those who occupy the highest ranks in society. We never fellowship with, we do not even desire the acquaintance of, the offscourings of the social world. Christ reversed this. He spent practically all of His time with the common people. Some of the tenderest words that ever fell from His lips were those that He spoke when He met an outcast woman. He seemed to know many of that class. To them He was delicately reserved, gentle, full of compassion and forgiving as motherhood. Then in the presence of the Pharisees, when confronting men who represented His race, the temple, the great past of Judaism, men who represented culture, law, morality, there suddenly fell from His lips anathemas indescribable.

When He says, "I am the Son of man," evidently this is not a plea for any mortal weakness, nor is it an attempt to classify Himself.

Scholarship affirms that if the pictures of Christ contained in the art galleries, upon the monuments and in the catacombs, if all these were folded into composite form, we

would have the exact image of Jesus of Nazareth. The writer of the third Gospel was probably a painter. It was an artistic age. It would have been perfectly natural for the early disciples to desire a portrait of the Master. John lived at Ephesus until he was past ninety. It would not have been unreasonable that some artist under the criticism of the apostle could have drawn an image that would have resembled Christ. The amazing thing is, that the paintings of Jesus Christ never leave upon us the impression, that we are gazing upon one who represented a splendid type of physical manhood. Not only that, but in our thinking of Christ, the picture we carry about in the art gallery of the imagination, we never associate with Him the idea of sex.

When we say that we love Christ, the word love has a meaning unlike anything found in human experience. The word "love," as it relates itself to Christ, is sexless. But the martyrdoms of centuries, having their origin in that single sentence, "The love of Christ constraineth me," reveal potentialities compared with which the affections that belong to the sexes, the patriotism that belongs to the state, are as the

whisperings of a brook compared with the surge of an avalanche.

He was granite-like in determination, yet saintliness takes its meaning from His bearing. His urbanity and condescension were never equalled by an ambassador. His dignity transcended that of monarchs. His denunciation of evil was terrible. His attitude toward the wrong-doer was the wonder of His times. We find upon His lips no regret, no feeling of disappointment, no traces of despair.

We judge men by the company they keep. He makes companions of fishermen, mingles with the mob, talks freely with men ranked as criminals, and women as harlots, yet it never occurs to us to judge Christ by that companionship. By His simple command men felt compelled to leave all and follow Him, yet His own surrender to a life of suffering has been the ideal of twenty centuries. He lays down His work at the end of three years and says His work is finished. No man that ever lived had the moral daring to confront eternity and say, with dying breath—" My work is done,"—as Christ said it.

He stands upon the earth, related to it

through birth, sustained by its food and drink, but his life is also merged into mysteries outside of life and time. The supernatural hovers over His cradle and flashes its wings through all the days and nights of His earthly career. His carpenter's bench loses itself in the transfiguration hour. A guest at a marriage, and sweating drops of blood in Gethsemane, constitute an unearthly blending of two hemispheres of antagonistic experiences. In a fisherman's hut eating bread, He seems real enough, but in the earthquake hour of the crucifixion, the world is thrilled with a supernatural something, so appalling in majesty that in the books we call histories, He is not even ranked with the Martyrs.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SKEPTIC'S DILEMMA; RATIONALISTIC THEORIES CONCERNING CHRIST.

One of three things is true of Jesus Christ. Either He was the result of accident, or of natural law, or a miracle. Was Jesus of Nazareth an accident? In this universe of cause and effect there are no accidents. Nothing ever simply happened.

If a comet should wrap this earth in fire, that would not be an accident. To say, therefore, that He was an accident, would be to affirm that law had ceased to exist, that effects needed no causes.

Was He the result of the natural laws of birth? Account for this mystery in Jesus; we find in His personality no footprints of the law of heredity. It is understood that modern science is entering an impeachment of heredity as an unbending law. But this can not be denied: Given a Chinese father and a Chinese mother, the babe has skin yellow as parchment and eyes that tilt in the brow like the Tower of Pisa. Given an African father and an African mother, the

babe is as black as a flower poisoned with frost. Given a Jewish father and a Jewish mother,—the child is not Chinese, African, or Saxon; it is *Jewish,* as if every page of the Old Testament had been burnt into its personality.

But heredity, this potter's wheel, upon which racial attributes are moulded like clay, heredity, whose hand of iron warps the mind and disposition, claimed no dominion over Him. Twenty centuries of Jewish blood flung their stormy waves upon His heart, but in the boldest flight of imagination, it is impossible to think of Jesus Christ simply as a Jew!

Mary, His mother, is a Jewess. Her thinking, her ideals, her temperament, are Jewish. She possesses at once all the weaknesses, graces, and attributes of her race. But in nothing does Jesus resemble His mother. From the standpoint of heredity, the physician cannot place his finger upon a racial resemblance. Are we reminded of Christ when we meet a Jew? *Never!* Even His thought is as universal as Himself.

Place Him in the balances and measure Him against the genius of His own people. The Jewish race of His hour had degener-

ated from a flowering vine into poison ivy. It was narrow, bigoted, fanatical, suspicious, traditional, materialistic, more fierce in hatred, more cruel in revenge, in greed more ravenous, in ritual more idolatrous, in defeat more slavish, and in victory more tyrannical than any of the world's races. But in Jesus we find attributes the reverse of all these. He was broad as the horizon, universal as the air, sympathetic as noonday, unsuspicious, liberal thoughted, hating traditions, tender-hearted as motherhood, in innocence, snowwhite as the brow of a maiden priest, the gentleness of a child crowned with the majesty of an angel, rending the materialism of His times with the ineffable radiance of His spiritual mindedness, while *cruelty, greed, money*—to name these words in His presence is blasphemy.

If the laws of human birth can produce a living statue of heavenly gold, like Jesus Christ, we have a right to look for similar characters elsewhere. But in the thousands of years before His birth, unto the twentieth century since, no man has appeared who has suggested to the world the faintest resemblance to the Master.

Soil, climate, environment have conquer-

ing influences in the production of men. Asia produced Buddha. It could not have produced a free thinker like Socrates. The Roman genius could not have had its cradle in Damascus. We cannot transplant the ancient Jewish spirit into San Francisco. To temple the Chinese Confucius in Europe, his teachings must be regenerated.

But Christ in Africa, Asia, Europe, America, wields a uniform influence. His teachings mould men in exactly the same type, without injury to personality or flaying the racial spirit, and these men, once Christians, are no longer affected by climate, customs or civilization.

Take, for example, a man who surrenders to Christ,—as we say, "is converted." He will testify that the very rivers of his thought reverse their currents; his conscience, which he thought was dead, rouses up like a lion; his will is sceptered to right action, in spite of alluring temptation; nay, the very aims of his life are winged with new and mighty purposes. It is easier to lift a river out of its bed than to transmute a wicked man into a good man. But Christ is performing this miracle daily; not simply a disciple here and there, but lifting multi-

tudes at once. A great revival is a time when the graves are opened, and the dead come forth in multitudes.

Here are the representatives of the races: A Chinese, an Hindu, a Persian, a Greek, a Roman, a Jew, a Saxon, a Negro. Put into each one the teachings of Confucius. Do you make them Chinese? No! Or, the teachings of Buddha, are they Hindus? No! Or, the teachings of Zoroaster, are they Persians? Or the teachings of Socrates, are they Greeks? Or, the teachings of Seneca, are they Romans? Or, the teachings of Moses, are they Jews? No!

Now put into each one the teachings of Jesus Christ and there is one result, these *are Christians.* And if at one end stand an Hindu, and at the other end Gladstone, if the Hindu hath in his heart, mind and soul, the teachings of Christ, equally with Gladstone, in the sight of God and the Angels he is spiritually as valuable as Gladstone. Christ's teachings affect men equally.

Let us approach the problem from the standpoint of the doctrine of mathematical probabilities.

There were millions of women living in

the world before Christ's birth. How probable is it that one who, by common consent, will be called "the greatest of the sons of men" will be born of a peasant Jewess. That piece of stone yonder in the desert is the Sphinx in sculpture. Hamlet is the Sphinx in literature, but Jesus of Nazareth is the Sphinx of the ages. No one has ever understood Him. No one understands Him now. His biography has never been written. The Gospels are paintings, not biographies. The men who have tried to write the life of Christ have failed. Men representing all ranks, professions, creeds and races, have attempted it, but no life of Christ has survived the author's generation of scholarship. For example, who, to-day reads the Life of Christ, by Renan, or Strauss? Or, take Mr. Beecher's Life of Christ, who reads that? What is the cause of the universal failure in attempting to write this life? The greatest minds in the world have not been able to improve upon the simple Gospel narratives.

The greatest minds cannot analyze His motives. Like charting the mountains and valleys of the sea, it is impossible. A man is never known until his motives and spirit are

known. Perhaps we have received our finest interpretation of Shakespeare from Hugo, because he was a poet six-winged like Shakespeare. To analyze Christ's motives would require a personality like Christ's.

Take, for example, His social life. The law is, "Like seeks like." Evidently rich men liked Him. Aristocrats sought His companionship. The schools were at first inclined to friendship. The priesthood would have welcomed Him with an "All Hail!" What was His motive in rejecting these splendid and powerful instruments which represented scholarship, political and religious power, to live upon the most intimate terms with fishermen and wage earners? What value could a discipleship representing a low social caste and poverty be to Him? Did He not know men? Yes, He knew that Peter was an insolent coward, that Thomas was a quicksand of skepticism, and that the heart of Judas was a smouldering black flame of treason. What inspired Him to elect Judas to apostolic rank and not Luke! Why did He choose James, a rude fisherman, rather than the scholarly Nicodemus?

Had Jesus Christ been an earthly genius

like Napoleon, for example, with a dream of world empire tempting his vision, would He have remained among the withered villages around Jerusalem? No! Human genius would have gone to Rome. Seneca was then alive. Imagine Christ standing upon the Roman forum delivering the world-thrilling sermon recorded in Matthew, before an audience of Stoics and Epicureans! Would they not have recognized that here were the solutions of their problems, problems centuries old? If these solutions appeal to us now, think how much more profoundly they would have appealed to the despairing hearts of Rome's great Stoics. Had Jesus of Nazareth gone to Rome, I doubt not that Seneca would have been His first disciple. I doubt not that the Stoical school would have surrendered. I doubt not that the statesmen, poets and scholars of the empire, nay, that Cæsar himself, all, would have bent their knees in reverence. Why did He not go to the banks of the Tiber, wheel under his plans the enginery of the Roman empire, and there begin laying the foundations of the new kingdom?

We do not know! To spend three brief years in those mud huts called "villages," in

the deliberate attempt to reconstruct the world, was, as a human plan, as impossible of fulfillment as for a man to try to upheave a mountain range by plucking up a few daffodils growing at its base.

The sinlessness of Christ has a miraculous meaning. Consider the many aspects under which you gaze upon Him. We see Him with the multitude, in the private family, the guest at a marriage, suddenly confronted by representatives of the schools, in the midst of a victorious march into Jerusalem, then beset by enemies, upon the Mount of Transfiguration, in Gethsemane, before the Sanhedrin, in the throne room before Herod, in Pilate's Judgment Hall, on His way out of Jerusalem, and unto the last anguished cry of the crucifixion, but we can not point to a single weakness. He is never betrayed into a foolish, indiscreet, or self-interested word or action. It is everywhere a life of incarnate holiness.

To prove that Christ was a man, the burden of proof lies upon the skeptic. Let Him prove wherein Christ sinned. For skepticism to say that He was a man and sinless is a contradiction in terms. Man is sinful. There has never been an exception. Christ's

holiness is not the result of culture. You find there no moral development. His conscience is as perfect the first day we meet Him as the last. It is never blurred. He is never better one day than another. He knew every temptation, passion, weakness, and limitation of human nature, but not from personal experience.

The word holiness is beyond our comprehension without the life of Christ to define it. They who attain the highest degree of moral goodness, are most frequent in their cries of shame, remorse and repentance. Christ prays much, but repents of nothing. He says, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" In literature there is no portrayal of a sinless life outside of the New Testament. There is only one alternative, either Jesus Christ was sinless, or, the Gospel writers were angels.

There are certain things about Jesus Christ which mark a distinct departure from the ranks of men. For example, His knowledge of men. It is absolute. Instantly when He meets Nathaniel He describes his character. He penetrates the secret wonder of Nicodemus, the double life of the Samaritan woman, the unspoken questions of His

enemies, the perplexity of the rich publican, the hidden thoughts of His disciples. He seemed to know men better than they knew themselves.

His knowledge of future days is evidence of knowledge without limitations! Without hesitation, He uprolls the scroll of to-morrow's events, whether that to-morrow enwrapped a day, a year, or, the ages which are still kneeling behind the throne of God with sealed lips.

Christ's prophecies have an historical quality, a time limit. He prophesied the treason of Judas, the cowardice of His disciples, the disloyalty of Peter, the nature of His own death, when and where it would take place. He prophesied the downfall of the temple, the siege of Jerusalem, the day of Pentecost, the persecution of the Christians by the Romans, the conversion of the Gentiles, then He swept His eye to the end of the world and prophesied the universal triumphs of His church through the ages.

Here the skeptics must pause. To say the Christian Church in its infancy created such a vision is to say, an effect created its own cause. The Church is here, surviving twenty centuries. The cause of its existence

must be equal to the divine results of twenty centuries.

He claimed miracle power; the authority to teach the wise; a knowledge of futurity; that He was the light of the world; that He was doing the fullness of God's will; that He had the right to re-establish religion; the right to set aside the law of Moses; the right to cleanse the temple; the right to forgive sin; the right to teach worship acceptable to God; that He was the predicted Messiah; that He would regenerate races; that men should worship Him as Lord, though it broke every human relationship and cost martyrdom. Search history and find another man who has made such claims. Is there a man in the world now, who would usurp the throne of a solitary affirmation?

He says to humanity, "I am from above, ye are from beneath." He stood in the presence of all religious and ethical theories, and said, "I am the light of the world." Statesmen, poets, scholars, prophets had theorized concerning a method of life. He said, "I am the way."

Without having seen other races, or studied other systems, or older civilizations,

He said, "Come unto me." He identified His thought, plans and life with God: "I and my Father are one." Nowhere do we find a discord between His life, His claims, and assumptions of power and authority. His feet touch the earth—His voice falls to us from infinite heights of moral supremacy.

He appropriates the titles and dignities of God. He permitted and demanded worship as God. He declared solemnly that He would be the judge of mankind in the end of the world. We have only one alternative: What He said is either true or false. If true, He was the Messiah, "The Immanuel," "God with us." If false, God has written a lie, upon the religious hopes of mankind.

The law of heredity can not claim Him, for His spirit is not cramped within Jewish walls of racial limitations. The law of environment can not claim Him, for no good thing had ever come out of Nazareth. The law of education can not claim Him, for He is not stamped with the imprint of the schools. The law of opportunity can not claim Him, for He lived among a rejected people and was limited to a ministry of three years. The law of genius can not claim

Him, for genius hath its several fixed orbits, and Christ moves in a moral realm above the intellects and saints of earth and time.

Some skeptics affirm, in trying to account for this mysterious personality, that one time a young Jewish Rabbi lived, whose beautiful character so appealed to his disciples that, in their enthusiasm, they added virtues to his life, thereby making his personality supernatural. They ask us to believe that four men, each in turn, succeeded in drawing an ideal man, a task that Shakespeare never even attempted. Shakespeare created ideal women. They are perfect, as women. They are not angels, but no grace could be added to enrich their feminine charm. Shakespeare failed to create one ideal man.

He created everything else but that.

This Saxon poet refuses to deal simply with rocks, trees, rivers, and mountains. He fashions a human avalanche and calls it Macbeth! It crushes the world. A starless midnight folds you in its arms; you are in the grasp of that materialism called Cæsar! You hear a mountain falling into the darkness; it is Othello staggering into doubt! A human grave rises athwart your path; the

treasons of centuries laugh hideously through lips of flesh and blood; that human tomb is Iago! All that is beautiful in affection greets you under two names, "Romeo," "Juliet!"

Shakespeare proposes to show what the human heart can suffer. He touches only one chord, a child's ingratitude. To preach this theme, he shows how it unseated Lear from his throne. Then Shakespeare summons the wildest moods of nature to express the agony of this heart-torn king. He places Lear upon a desert heath; he imprisons him under a cloud of tempest and thunder; then a fool is placed by his side! Night, storm and insanity are created to take the place of tears, to show what a father's heart can suffer.

Shakespeare refuses to deal with men as individuals. He dips his pen into the blood of races. He pours the entire history of the Jewish race into one man. He empties into that soul the cupidity of Jacob, the faith of Abraham, the joys, hopes, aims, the bigotry and conservatism of a great people, and calls that masterful spirit,—Shylock!

Again Shakespeare pauses. He has emptied the Roman Empire into Brutus.

England is pictured in kingly form. Egypt lingers upon the red, voluptuous lips of Cleopatra. Then comes the supreme effort. He compresses a thousand years into flesh and blood, puts a question upon those lips, and calls this regal nature, — Hamlet! Hamlet is Shakespeare himself.

Is this an ideal man?

See, the blood of Polonius rusts the sword in his trembling fingers; listen to that unearthly, wild and pathetic cry upon his lips, "Oh that this too, too solid flesh would melt!" What is this? The cry of Heathenism. It means despair! Shakespeare never solved one moral problem that opens a gate toward eternity.

Milton did not describe an ideal man; nor did Dante; nor did Virgil; nor did Homer. Search the world's literature of fact, poetry, fiction, myth, tradition and of history, there is no character that even faintly resembles Jesus of Nazareth.

AXIOMS.

I. All sacred beliefs must be accepted as true until proved false. Why? Because, first, they may be true; secondly, they are true until proven false. Men do not lie regard-

ing religion. They may be mistaken, but deliberate falsehood is a moral impossibility. Religion involves eternity. Men do not reach up hands against the skies and write deceitful tidings upon the white lips of the stars.

II. It must be conceded that a truth may be mysterious, not necessarily uncertain. How life comes out of death we do not know. It is a fact shrouded in mystery. Take the Christian dogma of the incarnation. The mystery of the incarnation is not greater than Christ Himself. He is not an uncertainty. That He lived is an historical fact. Moreover, the incarnation is not more mysterious than natural human birth. Science is as powerless in any birth chamber to explain "How?" as it is at the Bethlehem manger.

III. A truth may be apprehended, but never wholly comprehended. We apprehend the solar system, we do not comprehend it. We always speak of it in terms of mathematics. Between a row of figures and realms of light,—who can overleap that gulf? To comprehend anything means absolute knowledge, but absolute knowledge is an impossibility. That is true regarding a weed

or a planet. The same is true in religion. Take the life of Christ. Measure it against human life. The octaves of an organ are limited, not because there is a limitation to music, but the limitation is in our capacity to hear. It is as easy to imagine an hundred octaves as one. In comparing Christ's life with ours, we discover octaves which find marvelous echoes in our own. The octave of friendship, that of suffering, of weariness, of tears, the triumphant hour, the hour of desolation,—but here we pause! In the transfiguration there are octaves of the supernatural, and in the crucifixion there are octaves not only of suffering, but deep with profound spiritual significance; there the eternities touch His dying lips, but He speaks right on through the gathering darkness. These are realms in His experience concerning which we know nothing. Nor has any man that ever lived, professed to know them.

Take the Christian doctrine of regeneration. If it be a fact, it lies within the range of individual experience. By him it is apprehended, not comprehended. What has occurred, and the process by which it occurred, are secrets with God. It can be

simply affirmed; it can not be demonstrated, because, there can be no psychology of regeneration. We have not the divine data upon which to construct a theory that can explain its processes. A regenerated man is a living miracle, as though one unlocked a tomb door and came forth.

IV. A truth may be so vast it can only be hinted at. An orchestra could convey to this audience through a symphonic upheaval the suggestion of an ocean storm, but all the instruments of music that man has made or will make can never do more than hint forth the tragical cries of an angry sea. So with the doctrine of Christ's divinity. If it be true, it involves eternity, which is a truth so rich that it can not be circumscribed within the poverty of human speech. Between humanity and divinity is not the distance between a child and a man. It is not the difference between a savage and a Socrates. Time and physical growth will uplift the child into manhood's stature. Crowd centuries of universities into the brain of savagery, and a Socratic magnificence is the result. But the time element and college culture play no part in spanning the gulf between ourselves and Jesus Christ. In the

presence of Christ, the universal testimony of the saints of all ages has been a confession of shame and humiliation. They always affirm their unworthiness of being Christ's disciples. He is simply unapproachable. We can not even conceive of a process by which we can in a reasonable degree approximate the overpowering grandeur of His personality. The word "astronomy" is a dead word. It conveys no real picture of the midnight, with its seas of worlds; so the word "divinity" does not contain the heavens it hints forth. Scholars are as bewildered in the presence of that word as an owl suddenly flung into a noontide.

V. The evidence of a truth may be in partial ruins. But that does not destroy the truth itself. The only proofs we have that Pompeiians lived are the ruins of a city. No one in our century ever saw a Pompeiian. We accept the evidence of broken statues, fragments of architecture, and sculptured columns, as proof that the Pompeiians were an artistic people. The fragmentary character of the manuscripts upon which are built the Gospels, is not an argument against the facts contained in those Gospels. There is revealed a spider's malice in the

modern attack upon the Gospel narratives. The poetry of Homer, the speeches and essays of moralists and orators who lived centuries before the Christian era, are accepted in our universities without a whimper of protest; whereas the evidence for the authenticity of the New Testament, compared to the evidence that Homer ever lived or wrote the Iliad, or that Demosthenes delivered the speeches accredited to him, is overpowering.

Moreover, any process of criticism that challenges the authenticity of the New Testament can be used for the disruption of every page of history. The evidence that Christ lived is the Christian church. If broken statues are accepted as evidence of the artistic genius of the Pompeiians, the Christian church, with its supernatural ideals, its supernatural works, its supernatural influence for righteousness upon civilization, is the proof that Christ, the foundation of the church, was supernatural, or a miracle is here,—the effect is greater than the cause.

VI. A truth is never conditioned upon our own perception of it. Confront a blind man with an Aurora Borealis. To him it is mid-

night. No amount of argument can prove to him the weird transfiguration yonder in the horizon. He says, "I do not see it." The reason is not in the sky. It is because he is blind.

Judas and John had the same opportunity. They were peers in the Apostolic College. What unutterable horror we feel when in imagination we see there hideously outlined against the night the writhing body of Judas, the suicide, his name an execration, a hissing and an anathema. John on Patmos contemplating the panoramic upheaval of angels, trumpets and thrones, presents to us the difference between two men. The truth was perceived by one and unperceived by the other. Jesus Christ is the spiritual Sun of our world. Those who do not see Him have no excuse save self-caused moral blindness. Any intellectual reason for rejecting His light ceases to be an excuse,—it becomes a crime. For the man morally blind to deny the proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God has nothing to do with the fact. He may be a moral paralytic. The Jewish priests did precisely the same thing with a thousand years of prophets as witnesses, and with

Christ Himself in their very presence, enthroned amid wonderful works.

Our knowledge of God's Fatherhood we obtain from Jesus Christ. That knowledge is divine knowledge or it is not. The Unitarian and skeptic, affirming that Jesus Christ was divine only as we are divine, make every utterance of His lips, the crippled opinion of mortal thinking. For the Unitarian and skeptic to say that we may accept Jesus as an ideal, is not enough. A statue, a Titian picture in the house, are not sufficient for man's moral development. Just as we need authority in civil life robed in law, in the background helmeted police and the jail, above these the constitution of the Republic, and sceptered high above all, the Supreme Court of the United States, so in the religious life of man, the imperative need is, —Authority.

Christ, as a moralist, only ranks earthward with Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and that wonderful slave, Epictetus. What is lacking in these men? It is the tribunal voice of *authority.* When Jesus Christ speaks of sin, its consequences upon life, do not these men also teach the same? Yet we do not hinge our knees at their command,

If Jesus Christ is in the same category that spheres the mortal flesh of Aurelius and of Seneca, they are equal to Him in divine authority. But we read their writings with curious eyes, without fear, without remorse, and without tears. But in the presence of Jesus Christ the heart trembles, the most arrogant intellect is startled, the conscience is terror-stricken with forebodings of disaster. We feel that in His speech are dreadful issues involving future judgment. The man who does not feel this, is either a saint or a devil.

VII. A truth not visible here and now may be visible some other place. The rings of Saturn are not visible to the naked eye. They may be visible, however, to the inhabitants of another world. The Christian doctrine of the resurrection, if true, is not conditioned upon our assent or denial. The resurrection was a physical fact discerned through the eye and senses, requiring no faith. The testimony of these witnesses must be final. No amount of historical criticism or scientific skepticism can destroy a fact here, a fact twenty centuries in the past, or, a fact belonging to futurity.

This world may live for a million years

or millions of years. If the inhabitants of this earth shall outnumber the sands of the sea, their combined unbelief, denial, argument and testimony as witnesses could not alter one fact in a century chaptered with "Yesterday." The resurrection belongs there, not here.

Imagine an ant creeping up one of the ponderous columns of a great cathedral. Its delicate eye perceives minute flaws and crevices in the polished marble, and straightway it turns skeptic, and pronounces the building an impending ruin. But to behold that temple, in all its overpowering wealth of columns, arches and domes; to contemplate the holy purposes undergirding the foundations, the moral radiance folded in every statue, colonnade, altar and canvas; to grasp the thought of reverence, love, and worship for which it stands,—all this is not for an ant to comprehend.

So the intellectual-eyed Unitarian gazes upon the Christianity of God, and in the towering doctrinal column of the Trinity discovers a philosophical flaw, a logical crevice, a mathematical contradiction, and straightway pronounces the structure a metaphysical failure. But to grasp Christian-

ity as an architectural whole; to profoundly estimate its holy influence upon the individual, society, and the world; to measure its earth-sweeping victories, over men, nations, and civilizations; to march by its side through the centuries; to realize its powerful hold upon the present hour; to contemplate its divine relations to oncoming ages, its stupendous claims upon eternity;—to comprehend all this in detail and in fullness, is more than the eye of the professional skeptic or Unitarian can grasp, or his intellect understand. Either that, or Christendom is prostrate before an idol made of human clay.

CHAPTER X.

THE SKEPTIC'S DILEMMA; THE FORGERY THEORY.

One of two things is true, either Jesus Christ was, or He was not. If He was, the four Gospels contain a description of this God-man and we are under moral bonds to reckon with His claims. If He was not as portrayed by the four Gospels, there is a picture there of one who never lived, but was created in the furnace fires of the human intellect. Not only that, but there are four distinct descriptions, — four different types of mind are at work. Internal evidence, the style of writers, prove this. The man who wrote Matthew's Gospel could not have written John's Gospel.

The skeptic's affirmation that this character is a dramatic creation involves a miracle greater than Christ Himself.

What are the facts?

First, the Jewish mind was not dramatic in its genius. Not a single great dramatic character like Brutus or Richelieu appears in the Old Testament. Moreover, intellec-

tual Judaism at this hour was like a stagnant pool in the Sahara. Jesus Christ is an ocean that rolls tidal waves against the shores of twenty centuries. Oceans do not rise from desert pools. Moreover, the law of art is, that the Creator transcends that which is created. Above the tragedies of Shakespeare, is Shakespeare himself. Beyond the pyramids are the architectural minds that planned them. This is the law of art. Here is the reversal of this law. Four self-confessed sinful men create a sinless life. Not one writer pretends that he is an ideal man himself, yet each portrays in large outline and in detail the most perfect life described in literature.

The intellectual difficulties of this theory grow insuperable when you consider the fact that four men proposed to create an ideal life. We can understand how one man might dream of such a task. Also, that feeling unequal to the picture, he might invite the reinforcing genius of another; but that three men, nay, four, each independently of the other, within the same epoch, should undertake this, and not one writer, even by inference, should refer to the others, is itself supernatural.

Their self-proposed problem is this: To portray God inshrined in mortal flesh. Where shall they begin? How shall they begin? What materials shall they use? In the libraries of the past there are no materials. The skeptic is challenged to place his finger upon a single outline, real or imagined, in the literature of the ancient world, including the Old Testament, that these writers used as the model for this personality.

The first problem is, Where shall this mysterious Being have His origin? They agree that He shall not descend from the skies in angel form. Then He must have human birth. Scattered through the races of earth were prophecies of a God-man who was soon to appear.

Mark! These are Gentile prophecies.

Judaism was a tropical zone, producing volcanic natures. Heathenism was an arctic zone, producing iceberg intellects. Emotionalism was despised. Imagination was kept in bounds by the laws of art. Hence, these Gentile prophecies are simply stupefying.

Socrates urged his disciples to seek for one who he declared would deliver them

from the fear of death! Plato, four hundred years before Christ, in the most electrifying paragraph in Pagan literature, affirmed that when the perfect man came, the world would first scourge, then crucify him. How the heart burns when you read that sentence! Æschylus, the Shakespeare of Greek poets, announced that he knew of one who would one day dethrone Jupiter. He refused to give his name. Tacitus and Suetonius both affirmed that it was an ancient tradition that universal sovereignty would one day rise out of Judea. Virgil, the Roman poet, like a bugler, warned the world of the advent of a king under whose reign the lion and lamb would one day dwell together in peace. Even China joins the singers. Confucius predicted the coming of one who would revolutionize the world; while that mysterious voice, Zoroaster, in Persia, prophesied the nearness of one who would be the universal destroyer of evil.

Here are tongues chanting softly in the night. These are not the croakings of swamp-like natures. They are the world builders. They pressed the sacrament of

civilization to the lips of races. As they toiled, a vision came and vanished.

Now, which race shall the writers of the Gospels elect to give birth to Him who shall be the incarnation of these prophecies, plus the prophecies of Judaism? There is China, centuries old, with colleges painting her walls with civilization. There is India, with a mighty phalanx of poets, seers, and great religious geniuses. There is Persia, a people gifted with wonderful spirituality. There is Egypt, with priests veritable Colossi in scholarship. Then there are those epoch-making peoples, the Greeks and the Romans. What motive swayed these four penmen to pass by the world's mountain races and elect that ancient valley of contempt, the Jewish race, for this divine parentage? In the first place, was not the Jewish race the maligned and hated race of history? Was it not the byword and hissing among the nations? To ask China, India, Egypt, Persia, Athens, or Rome to accept a Jew as a representative of Heaven, would be frothing madness.

But waiving all the prejudices of the nations against that race, when these writers

elect the Jewish race to motherhood the Messiah, an obstacle stands in the way, unsurmountable as the palace gate of the North Star. The literature of Judaism globes a thousand years of prophecy. If the Messiah comes from that race, mark the intellectual difficulty! What kind of personality could be conceived of, into whom these riverlike centuries filled to the brim with prophecies could be emptied? Remember, also, these prophecies do not always run parallel. Sometimes they seem contradictory. When the prophecy hints that the Messiah shall be a "Lamb," the problem of the writers is to create one who shall be incarnate gentleness. But He is also called, "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah!" How could there be conceived of one who would embody lion-like qualities and at the same time show forth the nature of a lamb? This involves a contradiction, impossible of reconciliation. A lion and a lamb stand at the extremes of nature. They exclude each other by every natural law.

At last they begin! The story is unpaged with a star in the sky, a chant by angels, a birth by a virgin mother. We will concede that men would imagine that such wonders

would attend a divine advent into history. A God-child is now upon the earth. At once the problem becomes baffling. What shall they do with Him? Behold, they hide Him behind a carpenter's bench for nearly thirty years. What was their motive? Why should they hide Him at all? And of all places, at Nazareth! It was the scorned village, a mockery among the Jews themselves! "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" This is an old world proverb, centuries of contempt folded in derisive laughter.

Moreover, who will believe that a *carpenter* is the human essence of divinity? What motive swayed these writers to try to introduce into the world the representative of God, and then cover Him with the ragged poverty of a wage-earner, instead of the purple of royalty or the cloak of the scholar? Have not Plato and Seneca declared, "A man who works with his hands is a slave?"

At last He appears. Our first glimpse of this Messiah is when He is involved in temptation. Study this sphinx-like chapter of His life. It involves the most bewildering, dangerous and reason-throttling contradictions. No one saw what took place. What-

ever occurred, He told it. The contradiction lies in this: If the temptation scene did not occur, there is a falsehood involved. To say it did occur, and to say in the same breath that, "He was God in the flesh," is to say that God can be tempted! *That is simply overwhelming!* Ask scholarship the meaning of that temptation scene! It is easier to explain how to disorb the earth and push it back into the sun. The schools of twenty centuries have been unable to harmonize the contradictions involved. If scholarship cannot interpret that chapter in His life, imagine the genius it took to create it! In the wide range of drama and tragedy, there is no problem, there is no situation to compare with it. Nor can the imagination create one like it.

Suppose a divine man should appear. How would we know it? His speech would proclaim him. Greatness can not hide itself. A morning in June needs no eulogy, and certainly no introduction by a fan-fare of trumpets. These forgers are now confronted with the task of having this imaginary creation speak words, each wearing the halo of divinity. What shall they make Him say? Ask questions? No, we can ask

questions. Socrates did that. The world will soon know whether or not this be simply a Jewish Socrates. To prove that He is divine, instead of stating problems, He must solve them. What problems? All problems! There must be no moral problem involving one child of that hour, not one man, not one woman; there must be no moral problem that involves the family, the state, or the world's to-morrow,— there must be no moral problem that relates itself to earth's tribes and races, to all possible conditions between naked savagery and the most splendidly robed civilization,— there must be no problems that belong to sickness or health, weakness or strength, poverty or wealth, ignorance or culture, problems that reach from the cradle through all the amazing experiences of life to the edge of the grave,—AND THEN BEYOND IT!

Each and all of these problems must have solutions that will appeal to the world as true, that will be received by the universal heart, mind and conscience, and that will survive the tests of centuries of human experience!

And this the skeptics ask us to believe was done! They ask us to believe that four

unknown writers placed upon imaginary lips the solutions of the moral problems of this world, and the solutions of those mysterious and dreadful problems confronting every human being when flung by death into the eternities.

Suppose a man appeared and affirmed that he was the Son of God? We would say, "Prove it: go forth and raise the dead!" Why would we demand this? We would assume that a divine personality can do that which mortal genius can not. In other words, we would demand of one claiming a supernatural heritage, that he shall do supernatural works.

The astronomer will take one ray of light from a distant star, and submitting it to chemical analysis, will tell what the star is composed of; and yet no man on earth ever has seen or ever will see that star. The miracles of Christ may be subjected to a moral analysis more severe than any chemical test. Whether the alleged works were feats of jugglery or revelations of supernatural power may be easily demonstrated.

If miracles ever occur, they must have a moral basis, a moral background, and a moral purpose. Therefore, they must not

occur to excite curiosity. They must not occur frequently. They must not be monstrous. They must be morally right. They must reveal God, and they must save man. None of the alleged miracles of India will survive these crucial tests. The works of Christ, one by one, if placed in these delicate scales, will attest God's presence and power. Moreover, to suggest even that they were the feats of a juggler is to say a lie grew upon the holy lips of Christ, which is *monstrous.*

To affirm that these writers created these works in their imagination would be in itself a miracle. Skepticism is challenged to describe a single miracle He did *not* perform, necessary to attest that He was God incarnate.

It is impossible to think that the fourfold description was deliberately planned out. It is equally impossible to say that it was simply an accident. But concede that all these strange things happened. Suppose that four men, in whose presence Shakespeare and Plato were nurslings, suppose we concede that these four men fabricated this description of Jesus of Nazareth; the problem then is, what shall they do with Him ? How shall they dispose of Him?

They have introduced this character into earth and time. Their task is now to have this mysterious one disappear. Remember how they began! They began with a tumult of wonders in earth and sky. That was genius at work. But what is the law of genius? It is to maintain its own height. The earthworm and the eagle live in two different realms. If the advent was marked by such prodigies as the rending of the night by angel wings, imagine what the exit would be! Would not the exit be at least as supernatural as the advent? If four men had invented the records of this sinless life, the wonderful words, the transfiguration, the miracles,—imagine the appalling heights of glorified description these intellectual Titans would have attained, in telling of His departure. The apocalyptic visions of John would be a jangling interlude compared to the gorgeous description of that moment when this One, heaven born, returned to His own. What possessed four men first to think out a God-man, then to agree to try to palm Him off upon the religious life of the world, and allow Him to spend His dying hours upon the earth, nailed to a wooden cross like a Roman slave, between two thieves?

When the skeptic asks us to accept that theory of the Christ of the Gospels, he asks us to accept a greater miracle than Jesus Christ was Himself.

Skepticism, as a last resort, declares that civilization produced Him. Then, we are in the realm of cause and effect. Here are two commonplace axioms: The same causes forever produce the same results; second, greater causes produce greater results. What is our problem? We must take up the civilization of Nazareth, decompose its elements, and analyze them. We will then affirm that, given a civilization equal to Nazareth, it will produce a character like Jesus of Nazareth. Also, if in history a civilization is generated greater than that of Nazareth, we will have as a result a mightier character than Jesus of Nazareth. We have had civilizations since infinitely greater than that of Nazareth, yet no skeptic in two thousand years has ever affirmed that he, having been born in a nobler age, was therefore greater than Jesus of Nazareth. Nor has this eulogy been pronounced upon any historical genius of these centuries. To have suggested to Paul that he outranked Jesus; to have hinted this to Luther; nay, if the dis-

ciples of Voltaire, of Hume, or of Ingersoll had attempted to bow down and worship at their feet, it would have been rejected in horror.

Then the time problem! He deliberately affirmed that He had come to redeem the world, to lay the foundations of a kingdom that would make every throne His footstool. How much time did He have for this proposed miracle, the reconstruction of earth's races? How did He spend His time? There are whole months in the three years of His earthly ministry that we know nothing about. He spends night after night alone in prayer. He spends most of those brief months in obscure villages that have practically disappeared from the map. He spends His time with outcasts, with ignorant men and women, who could be of no assistance to Him whatever. Yet, He never hurried. He lived as though He had hundreds of years in His possession. He lived as though eternity were at His command in which to complete His mission.

Was Jesus Christ an accident? Then the prophecies are accidents. But in this universe of cause and effect, there are no acci-

dents. The universe is not built upon the contingency of fantastical caprice.

The prophetic element of the Old Testament cannot be ridiculed, obscured, ignored, denied, or waived out of this problem. It is a fact big as a thousand years. Suppose this to be an audience of skeptics, and these questions should be asked: "Gentlemen, do the prophecies in the Old Testament point to a Messiah?" The answer would be, "Yes!"

Question, "Do these prophecies relate to Jesus of Nazareth?" The skeptics would say, "No."

The third question, "Do these prophecies *apparently* relate to Jesus of Nazareth?" Why do they hesitate. They dare not say "No!" Because these prophecies *apparently do relate to Him.*

Now let us return to the problem of mathematical probabilities. How probable is it that one would be born of a Jewish peasant woman in whom hundreds of years of prophecy *apparently* will converge? You might as well ask, how probable is it that a Bethlehem will one day lift Jerusalem and transplant it upon the Alps.

The Apostle somewhere speaks about "a cloud of witnesses."

To materialize that sentence, pause under a cloudless midnight sky and contemplate the bewildering and ever-changing glory, the march and countermarch of stars across the firmament. Then remember that these are but the dying camp-fires of a vanished army. Behind them are suns and worlds of such awful magnitude that the mathematics of earth are powerless in their presence. Yet these are but sparks and firebrands flung by mysterious winds from the zone of some far-off conflagration. Go deeper still into the infinitudes, and universes dwell there, fixed like wheels in the chariots of God. Go deeper, and behind them, beyond them, there hangs a glorified mist, a stupendous maze of glory such as rises upon the vision, when one is speeding through the night within the boundaries of a great metropolis. Pass beyond them, and astronomy proclaims the existence of still mightier universes, flaming like the tents of legions of archangels. Then the telescope shrinks back amazed, for it hath caught glimpses that proclaim, that where the avalanche of worlds seems fading into storm clouds, those clouds themselves are universes; so that which seemed the end is but the beginning; we have contemplated

only the genesis of creation; the apocalypse lies still beyond!

If all that sumless vast of worlds were living intelligences, we should gain but a partial conception of the dread and immortal splendor unrolled in the apostle's vision when he speaks of "a cloud of witnesses!"

There is the page of history, a bending dome of sky; and in that sky the Oriental religions, a universe! There is the Jewish race, a universe glorified with starry-souled prophets! The poets and scholars of Athens, a completed universe! The triumphs of the Roman empire, the epochs of the golden age, another universe! A universe of ideas circling around a universe of mighty deeds! A universe of States interpenetrating a universe of art! Auroras of poetry, flaming beyond auroras of glorified battlefields! Horizons of science, supplementing horizons of philosophy! A Pleiades of kings, augmenting a Pleiades of martyrs; the flight of souls like comets, illuminating the centuries! The everlasting rain of epoch-making reformers! The unfolding centuries, more wonderful than the skies at midnight, luminous with personalities instead of worlds,—and then, the Heavenly citizenship: there, according

to John, are thrones, principalities, powers, and hierarchs of spirits; countless aggregations of angelic potencies; measureless multitudes of priestlike Seraphim; the elder children of eternity, themselves an host that no man can number;—then add to these the glorified ones whose music greeted the morning hour of creation, the overpowering glory of archangels, the waving of dread wings, the tumult, the surge of oncoming dreadful presences, whose personalities would require a miracle of thought and of speech to express in terms of human comprehension,—and binding this living grandeur of events, men, and angels into unity of plan and organization, there rises out of Bethlehem, the fulfillment of these thousands of years of prophecy and preparation, the central sun, JESUS OF NAZARETH!

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM, CONTRASTED WITH PLATO'S REPUBLIC, THE THEORY.

No kingdom-builder has ever been the incarnation of the genius of his race. Jesus of Nazareth was the embodiment of every moral attribute that belonged to the genius of His people, and possessed attributes unknown to Judaism. First let us witness the unique glory of Israel, measured against the Greek and Roman Genius.

Athens stood for poetry; Rome for prose; Judaism for spiritual things. Athens was a search for the beautiful; Rome for justice; the Jew for righteousness. Athens was æsthetic; Rome practical; the Jew ethical. Athens stood for causes; Rome for results; the Jew for final causes and results. Athens stood for ideas; Rome for facts; the Jew for eternal verities. Athens stood for art; Rome for business; the Jew for ideals. The Athenian poets sang of lofty deeds; the Roman poets of war and trade; the Jewish poets of the triumphs of God. Athens built an Academy; Rome built a throne; Judaism built an altar.

Athens treated men as citizens; the Romans treated men as soldiers; the Jews regarded men as the servants of God. Athens treated women as serfs, sometimes as scholars; Rome treated women as slaves; in Judaism, the words Wife, Mother, Sister, Daughter were hallowed with moral significance. Athens treated children as property of the state; Rome treated children as the property of their parents; the Jews treated children as the gifts of God. Athens made war in self-defence; Rome made war for conquest; the Jews made war for human liberty. Athens toiled for self-development; the Romans toiled for the development of the state; the Jews labored for the development of the world. Athens stood for the past; Rome for the present; Judaism for the future. Athens stood for a city; Rome for an empire; Judaism for a new kingdom. The Athenian aristocrat was a man of genius; the Roman aristocrat was a millionaire; the Jews glorified the common people.

The Athenian religion was full of joy and freedom; the Roman religion was full of gloomy restraint; the Jewish religion was full of solemn responsibilities. Athens adorned her gods with virtues; Rome wor-

shipped virtues as gods; the Jews incarnated virtues into their daily lives. The Greeks first found gods, then built temples for them; the Romans first built temples, then went out and stole every god they could lay their hands on; the Jews, without temples, worshipped Jehovah. The Athenian religion was intellectual; the Roman religion political, the gods belong to Rome; the Jewish religion was pervaded with the solemn spirit of eternity. Athens summed herself up in Socrates, a man of thought; Rome in Cæsar, a man of war; Judaism in Moses, a man of law. Zeus was the god of Olympus; Jupiter was the god of the Roman Capitol; the Jewish Jehovah was the Maker of worlds.

Here are attributes of the Jewish genius, attributes worn in fragments but resplendently in the loftiest moments of Israel's history. They represent centuries of discipline. But not a Jew in the Old Testament is the incarnation of one of these attributes in all its heaven-born radiance. Neither from Abraham to Malachi, does the race stand forth into a transfiguration hour, with all these moral splendors glorifying the age.

But Christ, like the Sun, gathers up the

light of all these supernatural attributes and, adding to these the glories of His own nature, overwhelms generations.

We have measured Christ against the Jewish genius; now let us measure Him against the Greek. The Greek spirit dwelt in Plato, the greatest intellect of the ages. His masterpiece was a description of "The Ideal Republic." He gathered the greatest theories of statecraft, tried and untried, and stamped them with his own genius. As a theoretical state, it is the political pyramid in the literature of the world. But it has always remained a theory, beautiful as a dream, unsubstantial as a dream. The statesman of no century ever attempted to materialize that dream into a fact.

Let us bring Plato's Republic and Christ's Kingdom into parallel contrast. We are about to compare Plato with Christ. The comparison will show, not simply Christ's superiority, but His absolute moral supremacy. The analysis will also show that Christ's kingdom, in theory and as it is being actualized by the Christian Church outranks Plato's Republic, as a glorified cloud in the sky outranks the shadow of a man.

First, let us see the advantages of Plato's

birth, the wonderful richness of the age in which Plato was born.

Pericles is there, the patriot, and Sappho, corrupt but beautiful and scholarly, and Æschylus, full orbed, with sun-like grandeur, with Sophocles and Euripides circling around him like splendid moons.

The battle of Marathon has just ended. Only yesterday, Herodotus could have been seen describing to the astonished Greeks what he had discovered in Egypt. Thucydides is busy writing the annals of the Peloponnesian war. Xenophon has made an immortal retreat with ten thousand men from the heart of Asia, and Archimedes is there, picturing on the sand the geometry of the skies. It was an age that listened to Demosthenes in the Senate, an age that revelled in the paintings of Apelles, each one a masterpiece, an age that saw the heights of the Acropolis suddenly burst into marble splendor, under the genius of Phidias.

This was the age of Plato, a period radiant with sculpture more wonderful than the pyramids, an hour mightier in eloquence, music, poetry, and scholarship than any preceding epoch since primeval man lived in caves.

But when Jesus Christ was born, a world-wide crisis had reached its zenith. There was a pause in the march of the nations. Not a trumpet's voice or drum's beat proclaimed new triumphs of progress. Imperial states lay in their tents, like soldiers the night before the battle. There slept the Jewish race, folded in robes of beautiful prophecies. Rome lay still, hushed by the dangerous music of a tyrant's voice. Athens lay drunken with the wine of skepticism. Egypt pillowed her head in the lap of the Sphinx and scarcely breathed. India, in the purpled East, dreamed of Buddha. China crouched by her side asleep without a dream. Persia wore upon her white brow a funeral wreath. It was the saddest hour in the world's history. Civilization seemed undergoing the frightful processes of self-burial. The rich, red blood of art-producing genius was turning into polluted water. Only a feeble throb in its mighty heart, attested the tidings that the world still lived. It was in this hour of universal moral lethargy and intellectual skepticism, that some shepherds kneeled at a manger in Bethlehem and worshipped a Child.

BETHLEHEM! It is not for thee, O Athens,

civilization's queen, to inaugurate Messiah's reign. Plato shall be thine and Socrates, and vast the multitude of thy Seers. To thee shall Phidias come, marbling thy streets with sculptured victories. The Muses tented in thy gates shall plume the arts with eagle wings, and at thy dusty shrines the human brain shall bow in reverence. But, O Goddess of Wisdom's mysteries, 'tis not for thee to gaze upon Messiah's face.

Nor thee, dread Cæsar's realm, 'tis not for thee to greet the One of whom the prophets spake. Rome, thy mantle shall fall on cities where merchants do congregate and fatten on the spoils of trade. On kingdoms, whose armies feast on blood and do thy battle thunders emulate. On states where senates rule, instructed by the laws; — yea, wherever ships, and swords, and thrones, the lust of gold and sovereignty, do constitute the boasted heritage of the age, there shall they celebrate thy pomp and majesty. But Emanuel, Israel's king, shall not set foot upon thy seven hills.

Nor thee, Jerusalem, 'tis not for thee to cradle the Prince of God. Triumphant are thy temples and thy palace walls, but thou hast bloody hands. Thy past shines glor-

ious as doth the moon on midnight seas, but in thy sacred courts evil is girt with diadem. Alas! for thee have kings kneeled down and prayed, have prophets wept, and martyrs shrivelled into flame. Thou hast a virgin's face, though smitten with a thousand years, and in thine eyes deep folded lie prophecies of Him thou didst ordain as "David's Son." But thou hast the harlot played, and 'tis not for thee to mother the Prince of God.

Jerusalem, Athens, Rome! Once did ye rule unchallenged, each in turn, monarch of earth and time! Now are ye mocked, despised, cast down, and Bethlehem exalted! Bethlehem! Thou weed hidden in the grass! Thou village clod of poverty! Least of the thousands of Judah, thou art all glorious! Thy meanest stones shall outrank gold! Mightier art thou than Cæsar's throne and Zion's fame and Plato's school! Kings, scholars, priests,—earth's multitudes, shall tread thy weed-grown streets in pilgrimage! Hail Bethlehem! Thou art the East and in thy skies shall rise "The Sun of Righteousness"!

Four hundred years after Plato, came Jesus of Nazareth. Plato was once sold as a slave. Christ died the death of a slave. Mys-

terious link between these two! Each gave the world a political vision. Plato called his "The Ideal Republic." Christ described His in the Sermon on the Mount, as "The New Kingdom." Let us bring Plato and Christ face to face. Let us analyze and sweep into contrast their distinctive principles. In this contrast, I hope to show, that Christ's teachings are heaven born, and Plato's are rooted in the swamp of human error.

Plato founded his Republic upon man as an earthly fact. Christ structured His kingdom upon man as a spiritual force. Plato demanded the exclusion of all poets, even Homer himself, wherein the poet taught low ideals. Christ demanded avoidance of the very appearance of evil. Plato said, "Blessed the soldier." Christ said — "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the meek, the merciful."

Plato said that the governors of the state should be moral men; Christ calls to the humblest individual to be the light of the world and salt of the earth. Plato eulogized external morality; Christ declared that if the righteousness of His disciples did not go deeper than the morality of the law-abiding Pharisees, they could not enter the King-

dom. Plato made the violation of law to consist in overt action; Christ placed crime in the motive behind the act, therefore anger equals murder, sinful imagination is adultery, and the foolish taking of oaths, blasphemy. Plato would resist evil with force; Christ announced the sublime doctrine, the resistance of evil with goodness.

Plato taught the efficiency of war; Christ, in His loneliest hour, said to his brave disciple, "Put up thy sword." Plato said nothing about benevolence; Christ made almsgiving a duty. Plato made Prayer a public ceremony, Christ a secret privilege. Plato glorified wealth, Christ the treasures of the moral life. Plato made loyalty to the state the first duty; Christ affirmed loyalty to God as the supreme imperative. Plato emphasized the earthly life of food, raiment and shelter; Christ placed these in the lowest category of man's needs. God and righteousness were named above all earthly things.

Plato made man the arbiter of his own good; Christ affirmed that God was the providence of man. Plato conditioned duty upon a race—Greeks to be loyal to Greeks; Christ, in the Golden Rule, rose above all

races and laid universal obligations upon each individual. Plato refused admission to Barbarians; Christ, with the vision of humanity before His eyes, said—"*Everyone* that doeth my Father's will," is a citizen of the Kingdom. Plato taught the Brahman doctrine of caste—the priest, the soldier, the mechanic, the agriculturist. With Christ all were equal, since all should be brethren.

Plato gave the most beautiful women to be the wives of the most cultured men. Christ made marriage holy as a sacrament and gave womanhood her crown. Plato permitted slavery; Christ, in His declaration that "To know the truth is freedom," laid deep the foundations of modern liberty. Plato offered no hope of development to the common people; Christ, in making wage-earners His disciples, inaugurated the reign of the common people. Plato saw only in one type, an ideal rule, the rule of The Aristocracy; Christ, rising above all earthly forms of government, proclaimed God as King of Kings.

The Republic did not recognize man as an immortal being. It taught that morality is possible without divine help; that sin is ignorance; that knowledge is virtue; that re-

demption is attained through culture; and that justice is the crowning virtue of character.

The Republic was only for scholars, an aristocracy of human genius. The Republic was to be Greek—it could not admit Barbarians. Its caste system compelled the degradation of the masses. Women, as the common wives of men, invited corruption. The theory that children should belong to the state, reversed natural law. The idea that the individual should be merged into the state, would destroy the manhood of the individual. The state's offering to solve soul problems, contradicts the profound intuitions and hunger of man's spirit nature.

CHAPTER XII.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM, CONTRASTED WITH THE ROMAN EMPIRE: THE FACT.

A Roman poet stands not far from the Manger of Bethlehem. That man was the poet Virgil. He was a poet, also a prophet. He stood in those last days amid the splendor of Roman Imperialism, but to him it seemed a Vesuvius threatening to destroy universal life. Hence the minor notes in his song. The world's music had been untuned by the rude voices of nearly a century of battlefields. Rome had bound the world in laws which had grown rusted as an iron chain. But when Virgil came, the human mind was in process of growth and expansion. World-wide conceptions of religion and empire gilded the dreams of men. A new procession of centuries was seen marshaling their forces. A new order of things was imminent. The old religions were singing requiems. Dogmas which seemed rock were crumbling into superstitions. The people looked upon their priests as upon tombs. Ceremonials mocked the worshipers. The

altars with their fiery brows terrorized men. A profound spiritual hunger, which the philosophers and priests had failed to satisfy, was growing in the minds of races.

It was this universal unrest that transfigured the eyes of Rome's last and greatest poet. A strange cry suddenly rends his lips. An apparition has amazed his sight. Beyond the throne of Cæsar, he sees as in a vision, a mightier throne, a swordless king, under whose reign the lion and the lamb were to dwell together in peace. It was this outburst, as magnificent as that in Isaiah, that makes this splendid bard the master spirit of his age.

When Jesus Christ was born, Augustus Cæsar sat upon the throne of Rome. He disguised the empire under the form of a Republic. He introduced the arts of peace. He kept the people amused, that they might not think too seriously. He developed agriculture. He encouraged art. He fostered literature. He found Rome a city built of brick; he made it a marble metropolis. Then gaze upon those masterpieces of architecture, rivaling in sublimity the temples of Egypt. Gaze upon the statues fresh from the hands of genius. Then the

baths, the temples of the gods, the palaces, the pictured columns, the forum, the Senate, the scholars, jurists and priests, and last of all and above all, Cæsar!—and the Roman Empire stands before you!

There is a single sentence in the New Testament that interprets the philosophy of history. It is that which affirms that Jesus of Nazareth was born, "In the fullness of time." That meant that the ages had completed their task. It meant that all that humanity could do had been done. All that the human mind could think out, every possible solution, had been wrought by the schools. It was "The Golden Age." A golden milestone had been driven in the earth. The most wonderful period in the history of earthly civilization had reached its zenith.

What are the counter facts? Why was it necessary to have a revelation at this moment? Let us analyze the actual social and political conditions that reigned.

Let us summon the poet Horace for a witness. Underneath the social life of the Romans he saw cruelty. Underneath the pleasures of life he saw that life was empty and meaningless, hence his satire, hence his

scorn. While the age was strong in arms, it was weak in morality. While it boasted luxury, poverty in its most pathetic forms crouched at the palace door. While it had literature, vices stalked through the streets unabashed. Rome had religions, but the temples were empty. Rome had Philosophers, but they were skeptics. Rome had theories of morals, but corruption abounded. Rome had theatres, but they were immodest. Rome had gorgeous architecture, but the people were clamoring for bread and games. Rome had statues, but they ofttimes portrayed the most savage passions. Rome had poets, but they were frivolous. Rome had scholars, but the masses were ignorant.

Petronius declared that Rome was like a field outside of a plague-smitten city in which there was nothing but carcasses and vultures feeding upon them. The passion for money had so corrupted commercial integrity that honesty became almost a crime. Tacitus and Seneca are terrible witnesses of the diseased mercantile life, while Juvenal walked the streets, his verse lashed into fury by imperial shamelessness. Forgery had developed into a fine art. Sycophants and parasites swarmed the couches of the rich,

mingling poison with medicine to hasten the realization of wealth. Theft wrinkled its scowl upon the sovereign face of commerce. Idleness wedded extravagance, and luxury perfumed vices. The Senate hung like a stringless instrument, the rhythmic melody of its law forgotten. Order was chaos. The poor were helpless in the Courts, while the rich bought up judges and mocked at law as imps do at virtue.

There were costly palaces, baths and libraries, but in the side streets poverty and degradation raised their heads in venomed malice. It was an "Age of Gold,"—rather, let us say, an age plated with gold, but underneath alloyed with savageries. Men were simply sculptured clay, mere shapes of human natures, not men. Civilization's sun gilded the splendid prison-houses called palaces. There was not a free school, not a hospital, not an asylum, not an institution where charity lived and mercy went forth. The hearts of the people congealed into ice, and the sighs of the poor swept through the streets without response.

The position of woman was indescribable. The noblest women of Rome went to the police courts and obtained license to prowl

the streets at midnight and trade their beauty for gold.

Seneca declared marriage to be a valuable institution, because it made the violation of the marital vows fascinating. It was said, "Vice walks the streets unmasked, innocence is no longer rare, it has ceased to exist." Another great Roman jeered, "Is there a man in the world who desires to become a voluptuary, a gambler, a libertine, let him come to Rome and learn." Livy mournfully affirmed, Rome can no longer bear her vices, nor the remedies for those vices."

What was the result of this tainting of woman's honor?

The crystal seas of literature became stagnant pools. Art blushed the cheeks even of savages who came to Rome to sell lions for the amphitheatre. The theatres which once aroused patriotism now soiled their lips with vulgar songs which slew the innocency of youth. The army which yesterday swept upon a battlefield singing like a storm, had lost its heroism, and its glory like a meteor fell and vanished in the universal night. The soldiers were damned with vices which have no name. The brothel had set its can-

cer seal and curse upon each face, and there they limp and creep and snarl, those wolves, who once were Cæsar's lions! Moral teachers, like Seneca, the makers of the ship of state, had sunken into the slime of sensualism. Once, the Emperor and the people bent reverential knees to virtues as to gods; now guilty priests swing incense before altars, where criminal passions are enthroned. The most dreadful crimes skulked behind the mask of religion. Murder lost its horror. Infanticide became respectable. The clown was applauded, the poet and scholar were scorned. The education of children was given over to voluptuous Greeks, and they destroyed the foundations of the family.

Listen to the verdict of Galen, the great physician of the hour. He has his finger upon the pulse of the Roman Empire in its Golden Age. He says, "The Romans walk the streets with bloodshot eyes, flabby cheeks, trembling hands and ruined memories, because of unnatural vices with each other."

Seneca, the preacher of the hour, Rome's greatest Moralist, Seneca who lived in the world when Jesus Christ was on this earth, this man is going to give you his final judg-

ment regarding the solution of life. He says: "Seest thou yon steep height? Seest thou thy throat, thy heart? Seest thou the rope, the dagger, poison, the precipice? These are the gateways of escape." Seneca affirmed the only solution was to commit suicide.

There is a tradition that Romulus and Remus, who built the city of Rome, were suckled by a wolf. The spirit of the wolf never departed from the empire. There is another tradition, that murdered blood was spilled upon the first wall flung round Rome. That blood became prophetic. There never was a time when Rome did not have blood upon her walls.

Cæsar! That name once majestic as a battlefield, now began to terrorize the world like the hideous cry of a leper. Cæsar fabricked the ancient empire upon Oriental ideas. He tried to replume the broken wing of Egyptian despotism. Rome became a star, it gave out light, but not life. It glorified a race. It spent its strength upon the present generation. It tried to harmonize the discords of society, by building schools, formulating laws, and forging political bonds of iron. Rome was man moving man-

ward. It worshipped the arts as gods, built temples to happiness, and jeweled earthly life with beauty. But its chariot wheel crushed individualism. Upon Cæsar's lip sat the breath of cemeteries. The knees of the people were used as steps leading to a throne. The Senate became an iron scepter of imperial caprice. The diadem became a ditch in which the liberties of the people were defiled. The army yoked itself to the drunken mood of that crowned beast in the palace, and wars were waged for conquest, for the sake of spoils, money and women.

Therefore, the deeds aimed to make the Tiber majestic rotted its very banks. The Roman legions, like starved tigers, drank the blood of races. Under freedom's broken wing, sat the classes, but not humanity. Woman was unqueened. The word "Mother," lost its halo. Inequalities sharp as thorns transfixed society. Vices were made virtues, by fitting them with diadems of imperial sanction. Against this dread majesty of ice burned fiercely the fires of social wrongs, demanding solution.

Rome proved that the state could not solve soul problems, that social antagonisms could not be adjusted by law, and that

statutes ratified by the Senate could not make ideal men.

Rome finally surrendered to foes without, although its shield of defense was the soldier. "Might makes right," is not and can never be the impregnable bulwark of the state.

Rome, like a consumptive, was dying and did not know it. The hectic flush upon the cheek of a consumptive, is not a flag of victory, but the prophecy of death. Rome had the hectic flush of apparent health: imperial armies, poets, statesmen, scholars, but Rome was dying.

I one time saw a sunset which seemed fairly to portray this hour, the dying hour of Roman imperialism. I stood upon the highest range of the Allegheny Mountains.

The sun had disappeared, but his shining remained. To the left was a field with a plow sticking in the furrow. On the right were pasture lands for flocks and herds, the melody of sheep bells softly touching the air with music. The day was done, and the hour grew into an intense silence.

Toward the west the fields were already folded in deep shadows. The forests in the background were indistinct but massive,

while the summits of the mountains in the distance levelled themselves into a broken velvety line of blue haze. Above that rim rose the sky. The contrasts in color were simply indescribable. The most gorgeous tints and hues inter-blended. Streams of fire, an apocalypse of splendors, rolled and flamed, as though at a hundred points at once a transfiguration scene was unfolding.

Looking toward the north, I noticed a wonderful change taking place. The brilliant colors were fading, and a mysterious afterglow of sombre tints began creeping over the landscape. It was the twilight! Onward swept this weird influence. A church spire vanished. The rail fences in the far away seemed to crumple into air. The scattered groups of trees massed themselves into huge splotches of ink. The twilight swept its fingers across the sky, and the lustrous gold merged into leaden hues. Then it seemed to move forward, a gigantic personality of darkness, blotting out hedges, and logs, and fields of corn. The ground on which I stood seemed to tremble. The plow shriveled up into a ghostly outline. The winds began to whisper. An insect broke the stillness with its strange cry. The earth

seemed putting on a shroud of death, when suddenly the sky, lifting itself above the night, slowly, softly, beautifully deepened into blue, and out of the depths, a delicate gleam of white reached down. It was the evening star, lifting the earth into the shining of countless midnight suns. That twilight hour was Roman imperialism, and that star,—The Star of Bethlehem!

What was the genius of the New Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth?

It was unlike anything the world had ever seen. It was to be a federation, not of men, but of souls. It had its final cause in the moral culture of the individual. Every will that submitted to Him, He accepted as a throne. The citizens of that kingdom have but one law,—"Love one another." Search the civilizations of antiquity, you find nothing to parallel this kingdom. Yet, in a rapid utterance, it leaps from His lips so complete in detail that the statesmen of the world have not been able to detect a flaw or suggest an improvement.

Christ did not duplicate the scepter of Cæsar, because He came to replace the golden age of things with a golden age of righteousness. He did not unsheathe the

sword, because He came to save, not to destroy. He did not try to fascinate mankind with the glitter of gold, because humanity needed morality and not wealth. He did not employ literature, because He came to replenish the human conscience. He did not summon the genius of art, because the earth was already filled with more beautiful statues than personalities. What a tragedy! He did not build schools, because philosophy had failed, and humanity needed a revelation.

The kingdom of Jesus Christ was a transfiguring power, working from the within to the without. It concentrated itself upon each individual as upon a world. It transformed men instead of conditions. It offered its breath to all races. It enthroned character above culture. It diademed the individual conscience with the majesty of a senate. It chiseled the passions into marble-like calmness. It horizoned mortal life with immortal possibilities. It incarnated holiness as the soul of happiness, and placed righteousness as the defense of the state, instead of the scarlet pomp of war.

The new kingdom declared that the filthy rags of the slave, in God's sight, were of

equal rank with the robes of monarchs. It vestured every man with transcendent rights. It proclaimed universal liberty. An Apostle declared that in Jesus Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. Christianity tried to make every man a moral Cæsar. Christianity purposed to make Rome what it ought to be, not tested by older civilizations, but measured in the white light of God's throne of holiness.

The objection, urged by the heathen skeptics, when Christianity appeared in Rome, was, that Christianity was not a philosophy, that the theory of the new kingdom was foreign to any vision of statesmanship found in the schools. The Christian scholars accepted the challenge. It was conceded that Christianity was not a philosophy. When had philosophy presumed to offer redemption to the world? Did it not, like an Egyptian sorceress, whisper curses with its spoken blessings? What reform had it ever nurtured into manhood? The schools were not for the common people. Only a trained wing could follow their sky-treading speculations. Moreover, did not their schools, like wolves, devour each other?

It is because Christianity is the reverse of

these things, that it claims supernal rights. Christianity bends its knee to the sovereignty of reason, but refuses to worship the mind as a god. It is a religion of revelation, not of speculation. It is the charioteer of every moral reform. It arches its sky over all races. It is a divine chorister, harmonizing the truths of the ages. The kingdom of Christ had not its origin in a schoolhouse, but in the secret counsels of the Almighty.

This was the glory of Christ's kingdom. *It cared nothing for titles.* For the first time in history, the common people had a kingdom they could call their own. When before had a kingdom of earth transfigured slaves, harlots, and lepers with moral graces? The sneer of the Romans, that Christianity was of barbaric birth and unworthy scholarly consideration, was met by a powerful rebuke. Why, then, thundered the Christian Apologists; why, then, do the skeptics employ every resource of wisdom in their warfare? Lightnings should battle with oaks, not with weeds!

But, behold! here is the cultured Marcus Aurelius leaving his throne to fight like a common soldier; Celsus wearing the polished shield of the school; Julian, Porphyry,

Lucian, sworded with scholarship, for what? To wrestle with a child's fable? In proving the Gospel writers were ignorant men, the skeptics proved too much! They themselves have demonstrated that it was an intellectual impossibility for those writers to invent the life of Christ.

Then came the magnificent countercharge. Let Aurelius, Celsus, and Julian explain how it happened that this kingdom, created by a Jewish carpenter, is the only kingdom large enough for the human race. A kingdom, whose softest words are more powerful than queenly tears; whose message was a funeral trumpet to Judaism; whose monuments are the empty temples of paganism; whose hand had plucked from the gods their diadems; in whose camp already were tented many of the masterful intellects of the age. Instead of being the foe of the Roman Empire, it was its angel. What vice did it not confront with anger? What tyranny, whether of internal passion or of enthroned caprice, did it not antagonize? Was there an infamous law, habit or custom, that did not find in this kingdom a mortal enemy?

Behold its triumphant march through

Cæsar's realm! A kingdom without gods or temples, pouring from golden vials the perfume of a new civilization. A kingdom initiating slaves, women, children, scholars into fraternity. A kingdom without artists, poets, or schools, but one whose graces bespoke a beauty not of earth. A kingdom preached first by fishermen and prophesied by Roman statesmen to be the mutterings of insanity, but already counting in its ranks soldiers, tribunes, senators, and some of Cæsar's household, sending its ambassadors into every village, city, and metropolis of the known world, the conqueror of the Roman Empire, yet its Saviour, the destroyer of its crimes and vices, and the imperishable guardian of its ancient glory!

Christ's Kingdom is not like man's empire. Yon cannot subject it to analysis and scientific examination. It is like nature. You can map out the course of the stream, but not its secret. The whole of animal life retreats to an egg, but the shell of the egg contains a precipice and a chasm.

Vegetation may be unwound like a spool of silk, until the seed is reached; then comes a pause. Nature is the word "Obedience," spelling itself in rivers, plains and mountain

ranges. There is a concealed mind directing these multitudinous movements. The fields are like cups of incense. The rivers fall into the sea like notes from an immense harp. Every Sahara is a silent ecstasy. Continents, though widely separated, toil toward universal ends like the soldiers of Alexander. There is no discord, no rebellion, no protest from any of the ranks of existence.

So it is with the Kingdom of God. The politician cannot behold it, the statesman cannot analyze it. Kings have laughed it to scorn, but God is not to be mocked. His Kingdom will come in spite of their feeble resistance. Every reformation quenched in one age breaks out fiercely in some other century.

Did not Nero think he had destroyed the Christian religion, when he thronged the amphitheatre with Christians and with tar and pitch made them living crucifixions of fire? The light from those burning bodies illuminates the world now.

Instead of the midnight of Africa, put in the morning star of Germany. Instead of the twilight of Egypt, put in the dawn of Europe. Instead of the clouds and darkness

of the Roman Empire, put in the noonday of the American Republic—and you have the world's map as it was and as it is.

This is one chapter of history written by the Kingdom of God. To-morrow another chapter will have begun. Men are still pleading.

Take Victor Hugo's great work — *Les Miserables*—what is it? It is a terrific indictment of society as it is. The vices of the city, harlots, vagabonds, paupers, murders, thefts, battlefields, jails and scaffolds—these are hideously outlined in tragic form. It is man as man that produces these monstrosities. Society is at fault, is the startling cry of that great book. Society, as society, is inhuman, savage in its hatreds, and barbarous in its judgments.

Hugo pleads for intelligence, for mercy, for humanity. He would not simply punish the offender at law, but bring to the criminal the hope of social and moral redemption. Justice has been a mockery, says this prophet; let us try forgiveness. Instead of the dungeon and the scaffold, let society, in patience and love, try to lift up the manhood in the man. Hugo places the rags of the streets against the door of the palace and

cries—"Have pity, this is hunger!" He rebukes the classes for separation from the masses. He invokes the Church to cease its periodical chanting and prayer-making and sermon-listening, and attempt the profound task of destroying the social hells of the times.

Victor Hugo's great work is a poet's effort to set to music the Sermon on the Mount. He tries to make morality a reality. What a tragedy it is to contemplate the fact that nearly two thousand years have passed away and that sermon is still in a book, a matter of words! Lift the throne, lift society, lift the world of trade, lift the age, and place these ponderous structures upon the Sermon of the Mount, and time shall be no more; the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. This is Hugo's passionate plea to the nineteenth century.

Hugo exaggerates nothing,—in the distance is another voice crying,

Look at Jerusalem, the Holy City!

Its poets, prophets, kings, the wonder of the world, yet there stands The Nazarene, looking down upon that London of Palestine, that superb New York of the Orient, that Paris of ancient civilization, in tears.

Is there no word of eulogy for its arts, temples, its magnificent past? Nothing but tears. He wept once at the grave of a friend. Now over this colossal city, glorious with a thousand years of history, He weeps again. Why? Because it too is dead. The gorgeous architecture of its streets in His vision became the mournful splendors of a tomb. Why was Jerusalem dead? Because it was externally cultured and internally corrupt. It had religion in the temple, but not in its heart. These were the causes of those tears which fell like rain over that beautiful but doomed city. And those tears should crystalize into prophetic thunders of warning over every Jerusalem of our times, whether surnamed London, New York, Paris or Chicago!

Men have founded states, but no one ever dreamed of establishing a state large enough to embrace all races. Great lawgivers have appeared, but not to give laws to the world. Men have defended empires, but never thought of putting forth effort in defense of the rights of humanity. The most daring dream of a politician never reached into centuries. Indeed, no statesman has been able to outline a policy that would

stand the test of the needs of his own time. Even prophets have not attemped to create a religious system that would sweep from age to age.

Christ was never in Asia,—from nothing He ever said did He know of the existence of the civilized nations outside of Judea. He did not know what great men were living or had lived. From nothing He says did He seem to know what plans had been tried, succeeded or failed; yet He comes forth from a carpenter's bench and attempts what no one ever before had even conceived of,—the building of a universal empire, an empire that would last as long as time and would embrace earth's races. And this, not through the use of any instrument employed by statesmen or kings. His plan involves this God-like conception of lifting the races of mankind into communion and fellowship with Angels, through the Cross.

The visions of the Jewish prophets,—the Holy Jerusalem,—which John saw descending from the skies,—the political dream of More's Utopia,—the social ideals drawn by Edward Bellamy, the theories of a golden age, which stir our times with political thunder gusts, called revolutions, even our

scholarly definitions of Heaven and the life immortal, constitute a Greek chorus to Christ's vision of "The New Kingdom."

Was this a vision? No, He actualized it in His life. His apostles and disciples, the Church Militant, are the shining of its walls. It is a kingdom without a parliament or senate, without a policy, without even diplomacy. An earthly king dies and the scepter passes to another. He gave His disciples no discretionary power. None were to occupy the throne but Himself. Empires perish. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not my words." An empire is local; this was to be universal. An empire needs the defense of armed men. His is built like a flower upon the principle of nonresistance.

Here is a kingdom at open war with earthly states; that makes no allowance for human ignorance, weakness or passion; that contradicts natural instincts, age-old customs and institutions; that gives to a king no other privileges than to a slave; that draws no arrogant distinctions between the sexes; that puts no wall between the respectable and the outcast; that offers to a wayward child as much as to a genius; that has

no favoritism for climate, condition of civilization or racial pre-eminence, yet a kingdom that, during its twenty centuries of existence, has never excited a protest nor a rebellion among His subjects.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN MORALS.

Propositions.

1. No man has ever succeeded in winning the love of men except he imitated Christ's spirit.

2. No great man has offered himself as a substitute for Christ as a standard of right and wrong.

3. No man who repudiated the teachings of Christ has ever unfolded into a beautiful manhood.

4. In twenty centuries no reform that did not aim to make men Christ-like, has had abiding influence.

5. No man except Christ has offered himself as the test of civilization.

6. No man or group of men has lifted a savage race into civilization except upon the principles of Christ. The teachings of skepticism in Africa would only deepen its frightful savagery.

7. Jesus Christ is to-day the test of the truth in other religions.

8. He is the test of true greatness in the lives of great men.

9. Christ taught men the secret of a holy life and claimed that with the knowledge of Himself as the Way, Truth, and Life, all false opinions and systems would disappear.

10. Great martyrs excite our pity and compassion. But when Christ was before Pilate, we pity Pilate, we pity the soldiers and Judas, we pity ourselves; and at the cross, humanity stands amazed, expectant, not knowing whether or not the earth will fall back into chaos, before a judgment of dreadful condemnation.

Men find fault with Christ in that He did not give the world a system of morals in logical outline. Is nature so? Do we find rigid, hard outlines of physical law nailed against the sky? God conceals the harshness of law behind beauty.

Any grass blade has wrapped up within it, color, symmetry, perfume; yet there are also hints of physical law. So Christ puts moral duty here, there, wherever emergencies arise. In every act of Christ you will find behind the beautiful benevolence, stern, inflexible moral law. He pointed out the privileges of a higher life, but the moment

you attempt living the higher life, you find under your feet granite blocks of law.

The story of Jacob asleep, his head resting on a stone pillow, and the subsequent vision of angels, is a profound religious truth. The soft pillows of luxury, ease, moral indifference, intellectual indolence, are not the conditions for spiritual visions. Duty performed, righteousness as a fact, strict integrity in our dealings with God, are the rock pillows whence are visioned the angels.

The old moralists looked upon man from speculative standpoints. What is man? was the great question. They counted his bones and mapped his intellect, and, after satisfying its curiosity, philosophy abandoned man, spread its wings, and began the investigation of the universe. Man was regarded simply as a pulsed clod, without any relation to the universe at large.

Christ reversed this. He began with man and ended with man. He regarded man as the culmination of earth and its spiritual explanation. Man is the final cause of the earth's exisetnce. Man is the fallen world. Christ's aim was to lift the human world back into its orbit of holiness.

This is not a world of accident. "The very hairs of your head are numbered," Christ said, which means that in God's sight nothing about man is insignificant or trifling. If every hair of the head is sacred, every act of man has age-wide significance; therefore every man is worth more than the world in the moral universe.

A flower has material form and foundation, but the difference between a clod and a violet is spiritual. There is no material difference. The beauty, the childish grace, the symmetry revealed in the violet, are spiritual values. God uses a clod as a channel to let those spiritual facts portray themselves. There is no material difference between a man's body and an ash heap, but in man we find thought, will, conscience, affection. God intended man to be a majesty, through which these forces should be displayed. But here the illustration breaks down. A violet is limited by its nature, by a certain capacity for unfolding perfume, beauty and perfection. Now take the word "Holiness" and place it in the presence of man. How much holiness is man able to express. How much of the divine nature can man partake? There are no limits. Christ

made morality have an immortal outreach. He said, "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect;" as if He had said that moral development is absolutely limitless. "Perfect as the Father"—what possibilities! In nature all the elements of sun, atmosphere, and rain operate upon each tree, as if it were the only tree in the world. A forest of a million trees reveals that each tree is reverenced by nature as though it were the king. Nature makes no distinction, whether the tree be oak, pine or cedar, a weed or a moonflower—all the enginery of nature's multiplied forces are brought to bear persistently, and with intelligent action, upon each tree for its noblest development. The old moralists tried to reconstruct men in aggregations, from national or racial standpoints. They failed because they contradicted natural law. Christ returned to God's method in nature. The method of Christ is the moral development of each Christian, no difference of what race, sex or condition. Christ treats each man as nature treats each tree, as though he were the only man in the world. All the divine forces of God are put into operation upon Simon, the crude fisherman, as upon

Saul, the intellectual prodigy of Tarsus. The whole Church, the entire Bible, the fullness of God's spirit are promised you as an individual, no difference who you are or what you are. The pagan overlooked the fact, that only in man's nature exist infinite possibilities. The pagan saw the immovable hills, the everlasting stretch of sky, while generations of human beings passed away like dreams. But man must not be measured against nature. Why? The mountains cannot expand, nor may the skies be increased an inch. But human nature is capable of limitless unfolding.

Between the mind of an Esquimau and that of Plato, there is a difference greater than that between the moon and Jupiter, but a distance that can be reduced by a university.

Saul of Tarsus and Paul the Apostle are as wide apart as hate and love. In one radiant hour that eternity is bridged. Such an action in nature is simply impossible. It would be like unlocking a noonday out of the midnight. But that which is impossible in nature, is possible in man. This hint of man's worth, the pagan priest overlooked.

It is only a hint, a crack in the wall, but the morning creeps through that small crevice. So through this hint we behold the shining of God.

"In God man lives and moves and has his being." Man is a partial revelation of God, just as God is the full revelation of man. God is spirit, man is spirit. Pronounce these words, and the universe fades away. Only two facts remain,—God, Man! God, the infinite, in Christ becoming finite! Man, the finite, through Christ, measuring toward the infinite. Such a sublime truth heathen religions could not grasp.

The old moralists laid emphasis upon morality in man, simply as an earthly being, while Christianity declared that man must act in relation to the fact, that man and earth are integral parts of the universe.

So we see in Christianity the principle that a man's moral life is tested by relationships to the universe of being. Then the universe takes the place of earth, eternity takes the place of time, the infinite takes the place of the finite. In the Christ-life we see this thought amplified. He lived not the life of a man, but as the Son of God. He was the

ideal life for all worlds. He lived not in time, but in the eternities. That is, He lived in the finite for infinite ends.

No system of morals ever attempted to bring the individual, the family, society, and the state into orchestral harmony. Christianity does this. The spirit of Christ so profoundly influences the individual that his moral life permeates these manifold relationships.

The old moralists made duty a limited act, limited by race, conditions, and environment. The Greek did not feel any obligation toward the Jew. The Himalaya mountains limited the Asiatic in moral relationships. Athens was the boundary line for the Greek. Jerusalem was the closed gate of Jewish obligation. The ethics of Seneca never breached the Roman wall. In one breath Christ swept the Asiatic, Athenian, Jewish, and Roman civilizations into the sea. He said, "Love the Universal Father and Universal Man as thou lovest thyself."

Paganism exhausted itself in the finite. The Pagan felt and said when the great Platos and Homers had passed away,—"The Golden Age is past." Mankind had reached and passed the splendid heights of life.

But hundreds of years after this came the Christ, showing that human nature was only in its infancy. Looking at the God-man, what a prophecy we see revealed! The Homers, Miltons, and Shakespeares are only the child-songs of the race. Angelo, Rubens, and Phidias are fading canvases. Plato, Humboldt, Columbus represent the genesis of human thinking; the Psalms are yet to be written. The world's libraries and universities contain only the stutterings and stammerings of the past. The world's thrones and empires for thousands of years represent feeble attempts to meet God's Kingdom, which, since time began, has been descending from the skies. What is the proof? God does not make use of the past. The glory of this morning bears no trace of yesterday's painting in its sky. The sunset of to-day, where an Angel paused to glance at the earth, is as gorgeous as any beheld on earth. Each spring new foliage and new music; autumn and winter are as strange and as thrilled with mystery as to the first man; and in this eternal procession of days, God walks!

Upon this fact we build the faith-joy of the present hour. Our modern poets, kneel-

ing in the forest depths or upon the ocean shore, do not hear simply divine voices breaking the silence, as did the pagan poets. Our poets catch messages from God to comfort man. Our scientists, not content with academic classifications of facts, are compelling rocks, lilies, and rivers to open their lips and speak to man of hope. Our historians are discovering, underneath the battlefields and ruins of states, the footprints of a divine order and purpose. The schoolboy of to-day can, from the morning newspaper, point out the holy tendency in these times.

The belief in paganism in the Golden Age of the past is disastrous. Why? If the noblest conditions existed yesterday, and we are in worse condition to-day, then we are going from good to bad, and from bad to worse. This is the law of decay. It unwings hope, it disrupts virtue, it blindfolds truth, and granite fatalism blocks the chariots of progress.

Christianity introduced into the world the creative idea of a new kingdom, a new people, and a new day. It said, "Old things are passed away. All things are become new." It was this thought that cleared the poisoned

atmosphere of pagan despair. Again the pulse of humanity began to throb with health. Literature revived, and the poet thrilled his harp with the joy of optimism. Philosophy became medicinal, and races surrendered to vices and degradation put forth gigantic efforts toward moral redemption.

The picture of the Angel putting a sword into the hand of the Maid of Orleans is not poetry. Every moral reformation is conditioned upon humanity's accepting the sword and vision of Heavenly ideals.

One cause of pagan decay was the belief that the history of humanity moved in circles. Paganism saw no forward, no upward movement. Events were mere happenings. Explanations of human genius and of states and their movements were attributed to accidents. Accident and chance as causes left the future an enigma. Christianity replaced chance as a cause, with the great thought that providence is ruling the world for lofty purposes; that God is patient and waits; that ages are to Him as one day; that disasters are school-rooms; that falls of empires are warnings against corruption; that the Maker of the world is toiling, slowly but victoriously, toward the de-

velopment of a perfect earth and a perfect humanity.

The best solution the pagan schools offered, in trying to attain virtue in a world so full of ignorance, vice, and wickedness, was the abandonment of the world itself. Hence the Stoic, the hermit, the scholarly recluse. He gave up the world to meditate upon goodness. It was the Stoic who was the first to cross swords with Christianity.

What was the Stoic's solution of life? "Let fame, money, health, life itself, all be considered as trifles." What about the problem of evil? "Let reason tell you what is right; let the will save you from doing wrong!"

The Stoic's solution of life was "Repression!" His sympathy was frosty as a December wind. In the Stoic's heart dreams of revolution met no response. He frescoed the ceilings of his thought with gorgeous colorings, while his actual life gangrened with materialism. Upon the Stoic's creed brave words strutted like kings. Seneca could preach about liberty, but under the crimson robe of his boasting, a chain clanked. Even Seneca crawled like a whipped slave at the feet of Nero. The Stoic gloried in his isola-

tion, yet kept his banishment gilded with the gold of civilization. In public he was robed in the skin of a lion; in the secret of his sorrow he whimpered like an unweaned fox. The blood beating drums in the temple of his brain was not a battle charge, but a retreat against the enemies of human life.

Stoicism said, "Crush the emotions. Make the heart adamant. Make the will iron. Annihilate every human joy!" Stoicism was for the individual; Christianity is for the family. The Stoic tried to make himself virtuous; Christianity would make the world righteous. The Stoic said, "Imitate great men;" Christ said, "Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Stoicism furnished no moral guide. No Stoic ever arose before men and said as Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." The Stoic was a self-contained man, exclusive as the Jewish Pharisee, and indifferent to the ills of the world as a funeral hearse.

The Stoic! Behold him in his degeneracy! A man who rejected the soldiership of ideals for the sake of definitions. A man who unstarred truths from the sky and lost them in a chaos of words. A man who never worshipped, except before the emblazoned altar

of a great occasion. A man who preached the unity of races behind a wall of caste; who taught fraternity and poisoned friendship with treason; who wept over a poem and tortured slaves for amusement; who eulogized benevolence and was a self-damned miser; who rebuked luxury with fingers purple with gluttony; who scourged the sepulchre with witticisms as long as he was in good health; who sceptered his lusts with sovereignty, upon the plea that they were natural; who drove his conscience into exile and made his will, his reason, his self-love, the proud triumvirate to rule his destiny. The Stoic said—"Let my will be done." Christ from the cross said—"Let Thy will be done." These simple words differentiate Christianity from all school-room theories.

There is one word singular to Christianity, in reference to morality,—that word is "Grace." God gives the individual grace, so he can live nobly. The imparting of grace, the divine gift, is the peculiar genius of Christianity.

Grace and the Holy Spirit enable sinful men to live righteously. It was this marvel that astounded the pagans. A corrupt

pagan became a Christian and at once a new and holy life began. Even the rack and torture were unable to make that man sin. It was God's grace that constituted this victory.

That is the new power which Christianity offered. "God's grace," which means divine strength to reinforce conscience, to strengthen the will, to open the eyes of the intellect. The man Saul of Tarsus, when morally blind, assists at the murder of Stephen; but when he receives God's grace, the scales fall from his eyes, and he becomes a universal apostle of righteousness.

God's grace, then, is the strange, new and mighty force in history. Under its reign disgraced women are redeemed. Immoral men become righteous. The streets of sin are purged, and the whole social and political life of the modern world has been revolutionized. It is God's grace that did it, not progress, reform, or civilization.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGAN RELIGIONS.

Propositions.

I. Wherever we find man, we find religion; therefore religion is necessary for man.

II. No religion of nature satisfies man. Africa is the proof. The continent of Africa is the most marvelous country upon the globe. Her mountains are cloud palaces. Her rivers are mysteries. Her forests are like seas. Her deserts are tombs for races. But the African mind has not been able to formulate a single religious idea rooted in nature that the world has accepted.

III. Morality without religion is not sufficient. China is the proof. Chinese civilization has for its soul a moral theory. Confucius is the human wall around China. But China presents to us the contradiction of an empire ruled by moral theories, an empire whose cities are the most indecent in the modern world.

IV. Man cannot, through speculation, find out God. India is the proof. The Hindu priest is the intellectual prodigy of earth

and time. But the doctrines of God and man, and their inter-relationship, doctrines expounded by Hindu priests after centuries of speculations, these doctrines have not been accepted by the Occidental world.

V. Culture without religion is not sufficient for man. Athens is the proof. Greek civilization was built upon a school-house, and is now a memory.

VI. No governmental theory has ever taken the place of religion and solved the moral problems of the race. The Roman Empire is the proof. Rome passed through centuries of political experiment. Every throne theory of government known to history was reared upon the banks of the Tiber; but Rome is the overwhelming evidence that statutes, jurisprudence, statesmanship do not satisfy man.

VII. Man has a capacity to know God, but is unable to know Him without a revelation. Will God reveal Himself to man? Jesus of Nazareth is the answer. There are two things that must be considered regarding Christianity. First,—all other religions are similar in content and genius. Christianity is unlike any other world religion, or all combined. This proves, first,—that

Christianity was not made by man; second, —that Christianity is not the evolution of older religions into a more perfect form.

It was said of Jesus, "He was the founder of a religion." Strictly speaking, this is not true. Search His utterances; how often do we find the word "Religion"? His theme was "Life." Christianity as an interpretation of life, and therefore a religion, is unconditioned. It does not rest upon a priesthood; nor upon an ecclesiastical system called the church; nor upon an ethical theory; nor a political vision. Christianity rests upon Christ.

It is not necessary to have any personal relationship with Confucius, Buddha, or Moses, to be a disciple of the religion that each represents. But to be a Christian, a man must know Christ through personal fellowship. For a Unitarian to say that he is a "Christian," is a contradiction in terms. *Personal fellowship with Christ as God,* is the secret of Christian discipleship. Either that, or Thomas's great exclamation, "My Lord and my God," is blasphemy.

Christ's actions and His doctrines inter-

lock. If we had not one word that Christ ever uttered, but had in the Gospels a picture of Christ's deeds, we could deduce from His deeds, the doctrines He preached. His miracles were His sermons in action. His religion does not eradicate human instincts. It yokes each one under moral restraint. He taught eating and drinking, but not the voluptuousness of Epicureanism. He taught self-denial, without the viciousness of Stoicism. He taught self-sacrifice, but not the Asiatic doctrine of self-torture. He taught holy living, but not asceticism. He made ministers, but not monks. His religion includes men, women and children, upon the same plane of moral responsibility.

It is a religion of revelation, like that of Judaism; a religion of self-sacrifice and self-realization, like that of India; a religion for the present hour, like that of China; a religion of reconciliation, like that of Persia; a religion in which God is infinitely distant, like that of Egypt; a religion in which God is infinitely near to man, like that of Greece; it is a religion of law and statesmanship, like that of Rome.

But here all resemblance ends.

It is a "Gospel," that is, "Good News to

the common people." Every doctrine is a palace of hope. It builds its temples upon the graves of slain passions. It gives the humbler virtues crowns of gold. It makes worship social; it makes it a divine fellowship. Its theory of life is workable. It exalts defeat and suffering into stepping stones to a larger faith. It puts a ban upon the bloody ax of mob revolution, but exalts reformation. It teaches men how to die unto self and unto the world, and yet master both.

While spiritual, it keeps warm, sympathetic hands on practical life. It is intolerant toward the smallest sin, yet welcomes the self-abandoned of both sexes. It is a religion of mystery, but leaves no question unanswered that is vital to man's welfare as an immortal being.

All religions, all philosophies, all sciences, propound one question: Who and what is God? He gave the final answer, "Our Father." He swept idolatry from the earth in a single sentence when He said, "Worship God in Spirit and in Truth."

All religions are rich in sacred rites and ceremonies. Christianity contains but two, —Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

His doctrines are true in all religions. His doctrines explain other religions. From the mountain crests of Christian philosophy, you can understand any religion in the world.

Christianity is so inclusive, it includes the truths of all religions. In that it is like the ocean; it includes the rivers. The paradox is, it is so exclusive that it excludes other religions as religions. Like the ocean, it cannot be put into a river. Is not Christianity historically rooted in Judaism? How could Christianity be put back in Judaism? Whenever we understand the process by which we can take the oak of an hundred years and thrust it back into the seed, then we can give the answer. When you try to amalgamate Christianity with any other religion, you destroy it. Christianity is all, or nothing. It asks nothing from other religions, and surrenders nothing to them.

All that He said that we have any record of, can be put upon a few pages; yet He never omitted to teach one duty or relationship between man and man, and between man and God. He never contradicted a religious truth that was in existence before He came. If this be simply a Jewish peasant,

how would He know what had been taught in schools hundreds, nay even thousands of years before His birth?

The archæologist in recent years has overturned the deserts, and we are now reading the stone tablets, the libraries that belonged to civilizations ten, fifteen and twenty thousand years ago. But no religious truth has ever been found, taught by the schools or the priesthoods of distant centuries, that Christ ever contradicted.

He went further; He completed every half religious truth then in existence.

When Pilate said,—"What is Truth?"—it was the *natural* mind asking the question. There is no Pilate now to ask, "What is Truth?" because there is no half-religious truth in the world to-day.

Also, He anticipated every social, political, moral and religious truth that has been taught in the last twenty centuries. No statesman, no sociologist, no ethical teacher, no priest or theologian has been able to proclaim a truth that belonged to these various realms, but can be found, rooted like a rainbow, in something Christ said.

Bring the skeptic's creed,—not that which he denies. Negations do not make a creed.

Submit what he affirms. Every skeptic has taught beautiful and holy principles, but no moral or religious principle has been proclaimed from Celsus to Ingersoll, but can be found anticipated in Christ's teachings.

That the world religions were man-made is proven by the fact that they are capable of vast modification. Take India and China for example. We find there development. Christianity is always the same. The form of the Church may change, but not the spirit of Christianity.

The old religions were profound attempts to know God. China, India, Persia, and Egypt represent progress in the knowledge of God. But the lacking element was to love God, and because this was lacking, love between man and man was an unknown principle.

These religions are partial in their outreach. In China, religion only vitally touches the Emperor, the Imperial Family. It influences a priestly cast in India, the wise men of Persia, the classes in Egypt. The millions are left unaffected. Christianity reaches into every caste and class of life. It affects kings and peasants; it is a religion for scholars and slaves; it is a religion

for a child, a woman, or man, of every degree of culture or lack of culture.

These religions did not bring righteousness to the state. Christianity affects the state powerfully. In the history of the world, not a state has disappeared because of Christianity, while ponderous empires have disappeared under the influence of the primitive religions.

None of these religions relieved the bondage and disgrace of labor. It found men slaves and left them slaves. The history of Christianity is wrapped up in few words. It made the slave into a serf, then into a citizen; and now, in America, because of Christianity, the highest political office is open to the poorest man of the Republic.

Every religion has been modified when introduced into a land dominated by other religions. Buddhism was modified in China, and the morals of Confucius were modified in Japan. Ofttimes these religions amalgamate. Also, no religion has ever been able to resist the constraining power exerted by the customs and traditions of an alien people. Christianity has never undergone modification, although it has

been introduced into every corner of the world.

The old religions affected only the better classes. They never influenced the masses, the criminal elements, and the abandoned. But the first outreach of Christianity was among these very elements.

All these religions had moral systems, but not one inspired generations of men to actual nobility of life.

Every religion was conditioned upon the destruction of some natural element in human nature. In China, the intellectual element is crushed. In India, religion slew the political instincts. In Egypt, religion stifled the conscience. Christianity gives to political life, liberty and moral development, while to the soul life of man it offers Christ, the whole Church, and infinite possibilities.

The Oriental religions contain truths so mysterious and profound that the common people could not understand them. The truths of Christianity, which create universities, are so simple that the common people hear them gladly.

Any one of these religions was superior

to the others in certain respects. China was an advance over Africa; India outranks China; Egypt gave loftier systems than India; Greece surpassed Egypt. But Christianity is supreme, because it is the full revelation of God. Christ's definition of God stands without change or development.

These old religions were not able to harmonize with the truths of other religions. Each demanded precedence, in order to live. Christianty is the inclusive religion. It destroys nothing but evil. Christianity has never rejected a truth ever discovered by man.

Not one of these religions brings into subjection the brain, heart, conscience, and will of man, at once and powerfully. Christianity affects the whole nature of man, as springtime does the earth.

They were religions for climates and races, not for humanity. Each propagated itself by the force of a superior priesthood, not by the regal majesty of truth. They tried to regulate, they could not remedy social and political evils. They could not adjust themselves to inventions, discoveries, new systems of science and philosophy.

The Gentile religions represented only

the past. Each was a sphinx. No solutions for the present hour ever breathed from its stony lips.

These religions have absolutely no influence upon the modern world. Does China mould the thought of Germany? Has England knelt at Buddha's shrine? What has Persia given France? Are Egypt's temples building in America?

Each religion was established by a person; it did not rest upon personality.

Each had a system of doctrines, but not one boasted a person the living incarnation of its doctrines.

They were sublime speculations; they lacked absoluteness in dogma. Christianity is not subject to one of these limitations, a fact which proves that it was not invented by the mind of man.

The old world religions are like the floods of Niagara, a vision of living waters, terminating in a whirlpool. Niagara! There in the foreground is a bewildering imagery of forests, cliffs, and islands, the shores girdled with rock, covered with foam, and wreathed in spray. Above, the firmament is like a terrible crystal,—below, the waters move, pouring their wine of wrath

into that gulf. It would not seem that mortal man could look upon that scene and live!

A spirit rises from that gulf, wearing the cloud as a garment, upon its head a rainbow,—a rainbow resplendent there before the pyramids were built, a rainbow destined to adorn the music of that flood, when countless centuries have perished amid its gorgeous colorings. Hark to the tumult and the shoutings! These are the voices of the Great Lakes bursting from those granite lips in oratorios. Behind that rainbow hangs the everlasting flood of waters, a rush of foam and tide, a mass of living emerald, columned there in billowy splendor, the storm of an ocean, suspended from a precipice! Only when some burning mountain has been flung into the sea, can the fury of that gulf be equalled. Destruction, sister of Chaos, is horsed upon that foam in full-orbed sovereignty!

But far below and beyond the plunge of the cataract is the whirlpool; that whirlpool is the tragedy of Niagara. Here there is no sound. The surge of waters moves resistlessly but silently. That angel spirit hath now into a demon turned. Each wave

is false as a Judas oath. The sea gives up its dead, but not this whirlpool. This constitutes its horror! Masked under the innocence of sleep, is death,—death without the mercy of a tomb!

There in the background of the ages are the old world religions like lakes, concentrating their forces. You hear the thunder of conflict of these ancient systems, rolling above granitic schools and temples. But, after all, these religions terminate in a whirlpool. The movement is not forward, but in a circle, and the whirlpool silence is unbroken by reforms or revolutions. The people, like foam-drops, fall back into a dreadful lethargy.

Asia is Niagara, but also above Niagara is arched the rainbow. So, above the religions of the Orient is being arched the vision of Jesus Christ, the prophecy and the pledge that never again shall the world fall back into the fatalism, the lethargy, the moral paralysis of the Orient.

But the Gentile religions and systems were not false. As Paul said, they were schoolmasters preparing the way for Christ. They were used of God to exhaust the genius of man in human plans of redemption. And

when savagery became barbarism and barbarian civilization, then came the golden age, then evening, twilight, night, and then "The Sun of Righteousness." For the proof, — imagine yourself standing upon some mountain summit in Africa. In Africa, because only amid this midnight can you understand the dawn, noonday, and twilight of a man-made civilization.

The dawn is in Asia. Slowly upon those plains we see the separation of the human family into races: the Turanian race, which hardly exists now; the Semitic, which again divides into the Arabic, Syrian, and Israelite; and finally the ancient Aryan people, which rolled backward into India, then forward into Persia and Europe. Part of the Semitico-Aryan race migrates into the Valley of the Nile. Suddenly from that desert the pyramids begin to rise.

Behold the vision of the Empires!

Egypt rises like a dream. Memphis is there in her granite robes; Thebes with her hundred gates; and midway in the desert is the Sphinx, already crouched in the sand to watch the procession of the nations. Following the empire of the pyramids, you behold the erection of the obelisks, which

marks a new dynasty. The Shepherd Kings have come and gone. We catch a glimpse of Abraham in his tent. The statue of Memnon greets with mysterious melody the rising sun. The nations are brought captive to Menephtah. The Jewish race begins its mysterious march through the ages, and the imperialism of the Pharaohs, shattered by the war-chariots of rival kings, has fallen forever.

Chaldea next assumes the robe of empire. Chaldea, daughter of a fourfold motherhood: Arabia, Abyssinia, Egypt, Africa! When Asia was in a lethargy, this people sprang up in a night; laying the foundations of the home, the city, the State; spreading science and art into surrounding countries; creating arithmetic and astronomy, the twelve signs of the zodiac,—and with scarcely a monument to perpetuate her reign, Chaldea bows in the desert sand and oblivion.

Assyria next uplifts her thrones, dominant for a thousand years. The morning light is breaking now. It was in this era that Moses climbed Mount Sinai. David attuned his harp. The blind Homer begs for bread, an immortal song upon his lips.

Babylon glows resplendently with monuments. Carthage rivals ancient Thebes in magnificence of temples. Elijah rebukes Ahab, and Isaiah thunders against tyrants. There stood Assyria with the passing of ten long centuries; flaying her enemies and selling their skins in the marts of trade; purloining science from Chaldea and teaching the world the art of empire. But the Scythians came with their savagery. The Medes came with their armies. The story is done. Stand yonder where the moon throws her splendid light upon the valleys of that strangely enchanted land. Down in those weeds are the marble ruins of a myriad of palaces. The barbaric pomp and blaze of Assyria are being swept away by the river Tigris.

Another empire rises upon our vision. It is Media, forever linked with the fortunes of Parthia and Persia. There upon the sculpture of Persepolis are engraved her annals. It is a story of primitive strength. Then came luxury, and with luxury, vices. Morality disappeared. Art vanished. The scepter lost its power. Only shadows are there. But amid those shadows there is something more powerful than the crown of Assyria.

It is the vague outline of the idea of God, which Zoroaster afterward immortalized under the symbol of fire.

Another nation takes its place in the procession of empires,—Babylonia. Babylonia, celebrated for her indomitable ambitions, her unequalled heroism, her marts of trade. Walk the streets of Babylon, that great city! Gaze upon her paintings, the temple of Belus, the hanging gardens, a prodigy planned for a queen's caprice, the gorgeous palaces built by captives swept from Phœnicia, Moab, and Assyria. Here is a kingdom built through conquest and established through princely inter-marriage. A kingdom holding the Jewish race in bondage nearly an hundred years. Suddenly, without apparent reason, that glorious nation crumbles into dust.

With Persia, the Orient completes its history. Into Persia emptied the luxury, scholarship, vices, and imperialism of the ancient world. A Cyrus for a monarch, a Zoroaster for a prophet. With one hand lifting the Jewish race back into supremacy, with the other rebuilding the streets of Babylon. In one moment rolling triumphant armies into India, in the next threatening the subjection

of Europe. But the Macedonians defeated the Persian hosts, Alexander trails their banners in the dust and smites the kingdom with paralysis.

The Orient was a vision of empires; the Occident, a procession of men mightier than empires! Out from the darkness comes Solon the law giver, almost as powerful as Moses. Thespis inaugurates the drama, the first schoolroom for the common people. Pythagoras lays the foundations of modern science; then comes Æschylus, who was even greater than Shakespeare. Shakespeare was content to have men speak as men, while Æschylus made his actors impersonate the sun, the ocean, the hurricane. Think of a poet who placed upon the lips of an actor the vast utterance of a volcano. His tragedies were so terrible that people fell stricken with delirium and death in the very midst of the theatre; while the loss of his hundred plays almost plunged the world into intellectual bankruptcy.

Surely civilization has worn itself out in the creation of such colossi. No! There is Tyre, with the most powerful navies in the world, and there Jerusalem, glorified with the sun-risings of a thousand years. Then,

a group of giants: Xerxes, who reduced war to a science; Herodotus, the father of history; Pericles, the Wendell Phillips of his time; Phidias, who bequeathed his immortal genius to Michael Angelo; and then we are dumbfounded with amazement, for there stride from the darkness, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle! Why, their very entrance was so terrific that Egypt disappeared. Asia suffered an eclipse, and then there unrolls before our eyes a noonday of unutterable grandeur. Demosthenes comes to make speech more powerful than armies. Hannibal makes the Alps kneel to his triumphs. Euclid re-establishes mathematics. The Stoic and Epicurean schools are here. Rome conquers the world. Augustus Cæsar is now upon the throne, Virgil repeats the song of Homer in magnificent Latin verse, and the golden age has come.

The Golden Age!

Thousands of years of men and empires were necessary to make the golden age possible. Yet, after all, it proved to be an age of clay, an age of night, rather than of gold. For the proof, bring now the African, the man, the midnight of whose heart and brain darkens his face, into the presence of these

colossal men and systems, and let him propound that heartrending question—"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And let them answer!

Buddha, where art thou? The Himalaya mountains lift their snows helplessly into the sky for answer—"Gone"! Confucius? From the depths of the Chinese world there comes an echo, then a vast silence! Zoroaster? Persia answers—"He is not here"! Pharaoh? A Sphinx, a pyramid, a waste of sand, no more; the glory of Egypt has fallen! Plato? The grass climbs the marble steps of the academy! Cæsar? No triumphant moral voice thrills that darkness!

At last the expectant hour of human history is come, "The fullness of time." The royal palaces were tombs. Imperialism fellowshipped with crime. Tyranny mocked the helpless cry of slaves. It was an age whose sins should have evoked the wrath of the Judgment Angel.

Suddenly that night was transfigured with a star; a manger cradles a Child upon whose kingly head there sat a God-like majesty; and at this very hour His disciples stand, before the regal tombs of the Orient,

and with trumps of resurrection they are crying, "Come forth!" and obedient to that lofty cry, they come, wrapt in the grave-clothes of the dead, India from her lethargy, China from her sleep, Persia from the dust, Africa from the night, destined to wear the immortal crowns of Christ, "The Fatherhood of God" and "The universal brotherhood of man!"

Christ's Challenge to the Skeptic.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

This is Christ's challenge.

The text means literally, ye who are overborne, exhausted, prostrate. It is addressed to the doubting-Thomas type of mind. It is an invitation to the man who has grappled with soul problems and is in intellectual despair.

There is no promise of solutions that shall be final. No mystery is to be explained. Doubt is not to be slain. The solution He tenders is: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." In other words, He affirmed that fellowship with Him brings

peace to the soul. The storm-swept sea of the mind becomes calm when the heart is close to the heart of God.

The Christian is not one who has ceased to doubt, nor is it required that credulity shall be substituted for reason. Faith means now to accept as true, like a child, things that may be demonstrated and understood to-morrow when one has become a man. A mystery may be a simple fact, but its demonstration lies beyond our present limited comprehension. To take Christ's yoke and to learn of Him have for consequence, peace with God. The Christian is one who holds his doubts in abeyance and says, "I do not know to-day; I shall know hereafter."

"Take my yoke, learn of me," has for its outcome, the joy that comes through fellowship with God. The Christians of earth are witnesses to this. A man in loving fellowship with God has this experience: Doubts are forgotten, as problems in mathematics are forgotten in the presence of the stars.

No other sage or seer ever presumed to say to humanity, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." High above all Schools and Religions is the Man of Nazareth with the

solution: Intellectual calm is conditioned upon fellowship with God. The claims of Christ stand or fall, with this challenge and invitation. Either He can or cannot quell the tempestuous ocean of the intellect with the simple command, "Peace, be still!"

The proof lies in a personal relationship to Jesus Christ. The countless myriads of Christians who have lived in tender fellowship with Christ, if conscious in the moment of dying, have given a uniform testimony. The last farewell to loved ones, then the calm, simple witness, "Jesus saves me!" This is the tribunal of last appeal. No argument can annul the witness of dying lips. Here Christianity rests its case;—To live in fellowship with Christ is to say, like Thomas, with the last breath, "My Lord and my God!"

THE END.